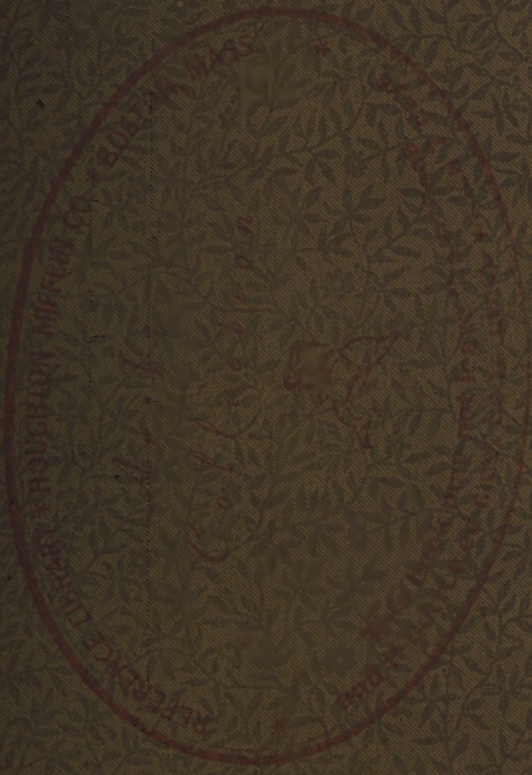
CHOY SUSAN

AND OTHER STORIES

WILLIAM HENRY BISHOP



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AND

OTHER STORIES

BY

WILLIAM HENRY BISHOP

AUTHOR OF "DETMOLD," "THE HOUSE OF A MERCHANT PRINCE," "OLD MEXICO AND HER LOST PROVINCES," ETC.

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CHOY SUSAN.

I.

THE ADVENT OF TEN MOON.

LESTER BALDWIN, storekeeper, in a tent, down at Sloan's Camp, arrived one morning at a Chinese fishing-village on the shore of the wide Pacific Ocean, in search of a few more railroad hands.

Instead of inquiring for the "bossee man" of the village in the usual way, it was, strangely enough, a woman, Choy Susan, to whom he directed himself. Choy Susan enjoyed in the Celestial community — partly through innate force of character, and partly because she had mastered the English tongue, and thus made herself invaluable in business dealings with the outside world — a position quite unusual with her sex.

Choy Susan was not at home. Nor, for the moment, was her partner, Yuen Wa, a super-annuated little old man, employed to tend shop

for her during her frequent absences, which often included even bold adventures to the fishing-grounds.

The storekeeper, as he stood knocking at the door, was a long, lank figure, "sandy-complected," as he himself would have said, with a sandy "goatee," a cast in one eye, and a chronic huskiness of voice. To his friends he was not Lester, but "Yank," or Yankee, Baldwin.

A large Chinese parrot, the morose "Tong," hung in a wooden cage without, alone acknowledged his presence and delivered in response to his knock a torrent of jargon, undoubtedly abuse, in the vernacular.

"*Quack-a-lee! cack-a-lee-lee-ee! whoo-oosh!* You're another," returned Yank Baldwin, facetiously, by way of reply in kind, and went on to continue his search.

The village had a deserted look. Even some doors which had stood ajar on the storekeeper's first approach now churlishly closed. There was no one at the tawdry little out-of-doors theatre, no one at the fane of Hop Wo, where an inscription for the benefit of strangers directed: "By This Way Go up Stairs;" there were no smooth polls being scraped smoother yet at the barber-shop. A person, in the smoky little cabaret, with its heavy wooden tables, who was engaged in preparing a dessert of hog's fat and sweet-

meats for the noonday meal, answered shortly, "Twel' o'clock!" and could not be induced to add another word.

"I'd like to wring your neck," began Yank Baldwin; but, again, resignedly, "Oh, well, what 's the use!"

He saw some men at a distance, on the beach, busied at a smoking tar-kettle, apparently mending a boat. He was betaking himself thither, and had reached a point where a grotesque idol, deity of fishermen, squatted on a rock among the dwellings, when he heard himself hailed:

"Eh, one man!" cried a voice, "where you go?"

It was Choy Susan herself. She had perhaps observed his quest, from some occupation in which she had been engaged in a shed used for general storage. She waddled towards him, her ample form costumed in a wide jacket and pantaloons of shiny black cotton, men's gaiters on her large feet, and a bunch of keys dangling at her girdle. Her round full face was plentifully marked with traces of small-pox.

"Oh, is that you, Choy Susan? How do?"

"How do?" replied Choy Susan, in a non-committal way.

"It 's a month o' Sundays sence I 've seen you, Susan. It 's good for weak eyes to set 'em on a fine, strappin', handsome figger of a woman like you, agin."

"Too much dam' talkee! What want?" she responded, treating this ingratiatory palaver with contempt.

"Well, then, we 'll get down to business right away. Say! I want catchee about a dozen good China boys, go down workee on railroad, Miller's division."

"No, can't catchee nothin'. Man all gone flish. Bimeby, some time, other day."

"Good pay! muchee eat! plenty much rice!" said the other, imperturbably, making pantomime of raising food to the mouth with both hands. "Say! I knew you was the one to git 'em. Sez I, 'If Choy Susan can't git 'em for us, nobody kin.'"

"Too much talkee! No, can't catchee nothin'."

And she made as if about to brusquely conclude the interview and go back to her affairs.

"It 's probably Easterby that would want 'em," appealed the applicant. "*You* know Easterby. He 's a *white* man."

"Mist' Easte'by he a daisy," returned the Chinawoman. She seemed rather mollified at this name, and now gazed up the street as if more inclined to consider the matter. This Easterby had, in fact, ingratiated himself with her of old by some small politeness or service, — a pleasant way he had of doing.

The village consisted of a main thoroughfare of wooden cabins, silvered gray by the weather, with a motley cluster, nearer the shore, of fish-houses, strangely-fashioned boats, and tackles, and tall frames of poles, along which were strung rows of fish drying in the sun. All was set down amid rugged bowlders, as silvery-gray as the houses. Bright little patches of color, red and yellow papers inscribed with hieroglyphics, a gay pennant, a tasseled glass lantern, a carved and gilded sign, scattered here and there through the whole, might serve, from a distance, as a reminiscence of the once vivid spring wild-flowers of the section, now vanished from the brown, dry pastures of midsummer.

Just in the edge of the expanse of blue bay lay at anchor the Chinese junk, Good Success and Golden Profits, — to transcribe into practicable form the mystic blazonry of her title — come round on her periodic trip from San Francisco, to gather up the product of the fishing industry and bring a freight of salt and empty barrels. She had discharged her cargo, and all at present was as quiet on board her as elsewhere.

"That 's right now," pursued Yank Baldwin, following up his advantage. "Easterby 's allers said your bark was worse than your bite."

Choy Susan's bark *was*, in fact, worse than

her bite. She was plainly a person much in the habit of being deferred to; and this, together with her need of defending herself against scoffers, of whom she had met with not a few among the "Melican" men, in a long experience, had given her a manner bluff, masculine, and even surly. But she was amenable to kindness, and there were even moments when, under her unsmiling exterior, she almost seemed to appreciate the humor of herself.

She prided herself on giving back to scoffers as good as they sent. She had begun her English at the Stockton Street Mission in San Francisco, and perfected it at the mines of Bodie. Now Bodie is a place where it is said that they would steal a red-hot stove with a fire in it, and "a bad man from Bodie" has passed into a proverb for all that is lawless and terrorizing. At this university she had picked up the choice stock of slang so useful to her in her way of life, together with her hybrid, half-English name, and the independent methods of action which made her the somewhat awe-inspiring figure that she was.

The negotiations for laborers had progressed to the point indicated when a prodigious clattering of horse's hoofs was heard. On they came, drawing, every instant nearer, till the sound increased to a phenomenal racket.

"Ger-eat guns!" cried Yank Baldwin, clapping his hat hard down upon his head and running around a corner for the better view, followed in a more leisurely way by Choy Susan.

A cavalier came tearing into the settlement, like a comet, as it were, run ashore. It was a Chinaman, mounted on a small roan steed, which snorted, wheezed, kicked, and bolted in the most extraordinary manner. The rider's loose garments ballooned in the wind, his eyes started from his head in terror, and at every plunge of the animal he bounded from the saddle high into the air.

A stride or two more, and they were here; another, and they were gone far up the street.

A sudden population, now appearing, — wherever they had been, — rushed forth and threw themselves in the track, crying in tones of agonized expostulation, —

"Ten Moon! Ten Moon!"

"Ten Moon!" shrieked the parrot, Tong, at Choy Susan's door, in a fierce, goblin-like mimicry of these.

Never, perhaps, since the days of the "fiery untamed steed" of Mazeppa, or since Roland brought the good news from Ghent, had equestrian arrived anywhere in more redoubtable haste than this.

"Well, if it ain't Ten Moon, the cook o' the

Palace Boardin' House, on my pony, Rattleweed! Oho! ho! ho-o! The boys has put up a job on him!" cried Yank Baldwin, slapping himself on the thigh with a big coarse hand. "A Chinaman on horseback! that beats a Jack Tar, and they beat the Dutch," and he doubled himself up in convulsions of laughter.

Turning inadvertently about, in his delight, he discovered a new figure, that of a pleasing young woman, standing behind him. He reported at camp afterwards that he was "dead gone on" her from the first instant he saw her. She had come quietly out of the storage shed, where, it seemed, she had been in company with Choy Susan.

She was attired in a brown merino dress with a few furbelows on the skirt. At the neck she wore a wide linen collar of a very fresh aspect; her brown hair was neatly smoothed. Her girlish face, of a clear pale complexion, had the general features rather small, though a long upper lip contributed to give a certain thoughtful cast. She wore a large flamboyant hat, of a kind which might have been in fashion on the Eastern seaboard some three years before. The knowing in such matters would have detected in her many traces of rusticity, but to Yank Baldwin she seemed the epitome of elegant distinction. She was a person far beyond

most of those he was in the habit of seeing in his way of life, and he considered her "high-toned," or "tony," in the extreme. A thought of unfaithfulness to the memory of a certain Spanish Luisa, of Monterey, at once occurred to him.

He drew a long face, as not deeming his merriment wholly decorous before the stranger, and threw out, by way of overture at conversation, —

"A pleasant *day!*"

"Yes, it *is* a pleasant day," she returned.

But she gave him very little heed; her glance was following with painful intensity instead the flying form of Ten Moon.

"Oh, he will be hurt; he will be killed, will he not?" she cried, clasping her hands appealingly as the rider disappeared around a turn.

"Yes, I s'pose so; that is, I hope so," replied the storekeeper nonchalantly, taking it quite as a matter of course.

The trio were now walking onward to witness the adventure, which must certainly be near its close, among the narrow lanes and by-ways of the place; Choy Susan behind the other two.

"You talk so about a fellow-being?" said the young girl, turning indignantly upon Baldwin.

"Well, may be they is feller-bein's. I dunno

but they is," he returned, weakening under her glance, and with an apologetic tone. "I dunno 's I 've got anything particular agin 'em, if *you* hain't."

He apparently admired in her an unusual spirit and originality of ideas, as well as good looks.

"The Chinese has got to *go*, though, I s'pose?" he suggested inquiringly.

"Well, that 's no reason for wanting them all to be fatally injured while they 're here."

But a much closer interest (soon to appear) than benevolence towards the race prompted her solicitude for this representative of it.

"What is the matter with the pony, and why do they call him Rattleweed?" she now condescended to inquire.

"They 've got to call him *something*," he replied, as if this were a complete and full explanation.

"Oh!" she merely commented, taking him in his own way, as if it were in fact an explanation. Before he could add anything further, he was called away to take part in a curious *mêlée* which now met their eyes in front.

The eccentric little animal, after fuming impatiently through various by-ways, had been checked by a pile of rocks and fishing paraphernalia, forming a *cul-de-sac*. This had given

time for assistance to come up. Some of the rescuers had thrown their arms wildly about its neck; others had seized Ten Moon by the legs; still others endeavored, with ropes, sticks, and poles, to snare the pony and throw him down.

Taken thus at a disadvantage, Rattleweed at last succumbed. With a certain expression as of duty accomplished, he went down amid great clamor, Ten Moon still in the saddle, and the others falling upon them in a confused heap.

All emerged from this, miraculous to say, with but few bruises and practically unhurt. When Ten Moon had felt his bones and found none of them broken, he began a voluble recital of his story to the crowd. The young surveyors down at Sloan's Camp, he said, had mounted him on this never-to-be-sufficiently-accursed beast, under pretense of kindness, that he might the sooner get back from his errand. The audience expressed, in looks and shrill tones of disgust, their opinion of the baseness of the surveyors aforesaid.

Choy Susan, with her air of authority, strode forward and interrupted the narration. She touched the speaker on the shoulder, drew him aside, and seemed to listen to some kind of report from him. Then she returned to her companion and reported in turn: —

"Ten Moon no got answer. No could find

Mist' Easte'by. Easte'by gone 'way down Miller's Camp. They send letter if he no come back light away, bimeby, plitty click."

The young girl made an effort at first to repress a strong feeling; then broke down with a despairing cry.

"Oh, what *shall* I do," she said, "if he does not get my letter at all?"

The interpreter and autocrat of the Chinese village looked at her in open surprise, followed at once by an expression of shrewd insight.

"You want to mally Mist' Easte'by? He you' beau?" she asked in a bluff, friendly way.

"Oh, Choy Susan, my father wants to make me marry another man! He has gone to Soledad now, to bring him. When they get back, it will have to be done. My father is a — a minister, in our faith, and can do it himself."

"How you come stay here?"

"I got my father to leave me on pretext of sickness. I told him I could not travel any farther in the jolting stage, and now I don't know what to do."

"Easte'by goin' stop it?"

"It was only by the merest accident I knew he was here," she returned, embarrassed. "I saw his name in a paper as among the surveyors at this place."

"How you come know he?"

Choy Susan propounded her questions in a dry, almost inquisitorial way.

"I used to know him when he was surveying down at Lehi, on the Utah Central road, and afterwards at Salt Lake City. It is a very long time ago. He used to talk to me about — about — running away, and joining his mother and sisters."

"So you goin' lun away, now?"

"Oh, Choy Susan, how can I? He has n't asked me. He does n't know I am here — I don't want to marry *any*body — *ever*. I only want somebody to *sym*pathize with me — to *know*."

She burst into hysterical sobs, and put her handkerchief to her face.

"Finding you here, I — I thought I would get you to take a note to him," she added: "but he will never get it."

"Um!" commented Choy Susan. "This new husbin, he goin' be Mormin, too? Takee plenty more wife, alle same likee Chinaman?"

"Yes, he is Mormon, too. They would not let me marry any other. They would think it my everlasting perdition. He is a relation of mine. I 've never seen him but once — and he is old, and — and ugly — and I *hate* him."

"No good for woman to mally man with plenty otha wife," said Choy Susan, with a

philosophic air, after a pause. "My makee big mistake myself."

"Ah?"

The listener turned an attentive ear to sympathetic wisdom even from so rude a source as this.

"Yes. You heap good lookee, but heap good lookee can catchee alle same plenty bad time."

Choy Susan meant, no doubt, that even great beauty may be coupled with a hapless fate, which we all know is true enough. "My know how it was myself," she continued. "My tellee you. My husbin name Hop Lee. My mally Hop Lee when my Jesus girl, down Stocktin Stleet Mission. He Jesus boy, too."

"Oh, you were Christians, then?"

"One time; not now. Hop Lee he say, 'You mally me; I got heap big store, heap money. You no work sewin'-m'chine; you catchee plenty good time, plenty loafee. I no takee no more wife.'"

"He promised you not to marry again, then?"

"He plomise." The speaker closed one eye shrewdly; then reopened it. "Bimeby plitty click I get sick, small-pock. He say, 'You no good. Shut up! I goin' bling otha wife.' He bling two more wife. They beatee me; makee work sewin'-m'chine alle time, alle time, alle samee likee slave."

"Poor Choy Susan!"

"Yes. So one day I lun 'way. Catchee money and man clothes, catchee railroad, and goee Salt Lake City."

"And that was the time when you had broken your arm, and I met you there?"

"Yes, and you helpa me. Bimeby I go Bodie; then come here, get pardner, go fish, and kleep store."

"And what has become of Hop Lee?"

"He dead," said Choy Susan, contemptuously. "I pray Jesus 'ligion first time makee Hop Lee die, but it no makee him die. Then I pray China 'ligion makee die, and China 'ligion makee die, and both wife too, light away, plitty click. China joss much more good. Jesus 'ligion no good."

"Oh, no, you must not say that!" expostulated the girl; but she was easily led back to her own affair, to which the Chinese interpreter returned.

"When you father and otha man comin' back?" inquired the latter.

"Inside of four or five days; and then it will have to be done," the fair speaker whimpered tearfully.

"Oh, plenty muchee time! plenty time!" reassuringly. "Easte'by he get letter, he come. You see!"

Yank Baldwin now came up and interrupted, having taken his eccentric pony away from the chaotic scramble, and secured him in a place of safety.

"Crazy as a bedbug!" he condescended to explain. "He 's eat some o' this here rattle-weed, *loco*-weed, what grows in the pastures. It gives 'em a kind o' jim-jams. He goes like that every time he starts out. Never knows when to stop. He 'd run himself to death if you 'd let him. Run away once't with a paymaster's wagon, and seven thousand dollars under the seat, and was out all night, and found asleep on his feet next mornin', in the woods."

His new acquaintance made a polite pretense of listening, but furtively edged off, at the same time, to take her departure.

"He 'll go down, some day, all of a heap, like the sun in the tropicts," said the man, following her up. "There 's *folks* like that, too, — always on the jump, always burnin' the candle at both ends. I 've been a good deal that way myself. I 've been thinkin' it 's 'bout time for me to get me a good, spry, harnsome wife, and settle down."

He accompanied this speech with a glance of bold admiration which had a meaning plainly evident.

Yank Baldwin's theory was "love at first

sight," and by no means confined to a single occasion either. His stock of devotion lay very near the surface, and subject to many and prompt demands. It was said of him that he had once proposed to a waiter-girl at Frisco on her bringing the second cup of coffee, and had lost her only through being distanced by a comrade who had already secured her after the first.

The fair stranger did not remain long to listen to these gallantries, but tripped demurely away from the hamlet, going in the direction of the Palace Boarding House, at no great distance off.

"Who *is* she?" inquired Baldwin, looking after her.

"She one o' them Mormins, — friend o' mine over to Salt Lake."

"*She* ain't no Mormon," in strong incredulity.

"She *Mormin*, — you hear me?" retorted Choy Susan, severely. "Goin' mally man with heap otha wife alle same likee Chinaman, too."

"Go 'way!"

He whistled softly.

"*You* go 'way!" returned Choy Susan, in her most rowdy manner.

"Where 's she stoppin'?" the storekeeper inquired, reflectively.

"Palace Boardin' House."

"That 's where I take my meals myself, when I 'm up here from camp. I 'll be goin' over there pretty soon."

He whistled several times more, low meditative whistles, of peculiar meaning.

"What was Ten Moon up to, down there to camp?" he asked.

"Guess he want see China cook," the woman replied, carelessly. "Goin' back to China day after to-morra. Takee boat down there," pointing to the junk in the bay; "then big boat on big water from Frisco."

Upon this they returned to the matter of securing hands for the railroad. Yank Baldwin interrupted once more, however, as if dismissing, in a final way, some absurd idea that might have flashed through his brain.

"No Mormon in *mine!* Not any! That ain't what I 'm *after*. Spanish Luisa 's better 'n *that*, a mighty sight."

It was necessary to see Yuen Wa, Choy Susan's "pardner," about the negotiation. He had been a contractor for labor in his time, and still kept, more or less, the run of such matters. He was found now in the stuffy little shop, a place full of curious truck, specimens of the fine large *avallonia* shells from the beach, dried avallonia meat and goose livers, opium

pipes, sticks of India ink, silver jewelry, and packets of face powder for the women. A wizened-up little old man, with a thin, piping voice, and reticent of speech, he was more like one of his own idols than anything else. It was easy to see that he was a person of minor importance as compared with his more vigorous feminine associate.

"All our available labor," explained Yuen Wa, in substance, "is needed to-morrow and next day to get the junk Good Success and Golden Profits off to sea. After that, comes a series of 'good' days, a festival, when we do no work at all. But after that" —

"Never you mind," said Yank Baldwin. "I 'll go and see them Eyetalians over to Monterey. May be I kin get enough o' them. If I can't, I 'll come back. — And may be none won't be needed any way. It 's kinder onsartain."

As he was going, he observed Choy Susan pick up, as with some surprise, a couple of small English volumes, from one end of her counter.

"B'long to she. Leave 'm here, I guess, when she comee see me, yest'd'y," she said, reflectively.

"Whose? hern?" said Yank Baldwin, standing beside her as she opened them. "I 'm goin'

back her way. I'll give 'em to her," and he took them from her eagerly, almost by force.

One proved to be a book of doctrines of the church of Mormon, or Latter-Day Saints. The other was a novel somewhat noted for its peculiarly tender and affecting love passages. In the former was inscribed, in a prim, small, girlish hand, the name — probably of the owner — *Marcella Eudora Gilham, Deseret University, Salt Lake City.* Underneath was a date of about two years earlier.

Some passages of the doctrines were heavily underscored in pencil, as if they might have been subject of peculiar wrestling and study, or perhaps, again, in triumphant recognition of their force against error.

Yank Baldwin turned the volumes musingly, as he went along, and more than once nearly came to grief over obstructions on the road on account of them. And he whistled softly to himself a great many times more.

II.

THE PALACE BOARDING HOUSE.

The Palace Boarding House had once been an inn. It was enjoying a slight revival of prosperity at present through the burning down

of the hotel at the American-Spanish town near by, which it adjoins on the one hand, as it did the Chinese village on the other. It lay at the intersection of two roads, leading respectively up and down the coast and back into the interior. Behind it were great dusky woods of a moss-hung pine and cypress peculiar to the coast, and before it was the sea, palisaded by bold gray cliffs. It was but a rambling shingle edifice, in shabby repair, and its title was hardly borne out by the facts, but was, rather, a tribute from the florid imagination of the place.

At one corner of the shabby veranda creaked a large signboard, reading thus: —

PALACE BOARDING HOUSE.
SQUARE MEALS, $1.00.
BY MRS. JANE McCURDY.

Some hens were scratching about the sterile door-yard, and a colt, with his head triced up in a breaking-bridle, was wandering there, with a portentous sense of the indignity of his situation.

Yank Baldwin was late at dinner, and his new acquaintance, Miss Marcella Eudora Gilham, was late also and the only guest at table

with him. He was so impressed with her anew that he forgot for some time to give back the books he had brought. He paused in admiration with his fork half raised to his mouth. She had made some slight new adjustments to her toilette. She was without the flamboyant hat, had added a fresh new bow at the neck, and her smooth hair was smoother than ever. He contrasted hers with the somewhat frowzy style of Spanish Luisa, of Monterey; and though the raven tresses, heavy eye-brows, and soft and melting mouth of this latter were of a genuine fascination, he felt the contrast as one most unfavorable to her.

Finally he bethought him of the books, returned them, and made various other ingratiating advances, but for the moment without notable success.

"If she wa'n't Mormon, I don't s'pose I could expect her to look the same side o' the road I was on," he said to himself.

Mrs. Jane McCurdy, the landlady, now came in from her arduous labors in the kitchen, to permit herself the solace of her own dinner.

"Mr. Bald'in, he 's connected with the new railroad," she said to Marcella, by way of aiding to bring about a sociable feeling between the two guests.

"My eldest son, he 's allers follered firin', too,

on the railroad, or else teamin', one. I dunno just what *is* become of him now," she continued, foraging, and making judicious selections from the lukewarm viands remaining on the various tables.

It seemed as if Marcella regarded the storekeeper upon this with an increase of interest. She had a certain meditative way of looking at him, and began to talk more amiably, though on general topics.

"Somebody was sayin' how she was a Mormon," suggested Yank Baldwin to the landlady, when the girl had finally left the room.

"I expect she is," sighed that hardworked woman, sitting down in a weary way.

"Josephite, most likely? I've seen Josephites down to San Barnardino. They ain't much different from other folks."

"No, I expect she's one o' the reglar uns."

"Not solid Mormon?"

"*Solid*," said Mrs. McCurdy, shutting out the last ray of hope, as she peeled a cold boiled potato.

Yank Baldwin groaned in spirit.

"Her father, he's a kind o' bishop, or 'postle, among 'em, I guess," went on the landlady, gossiping. "Round this way to visit among the brethren and do a stroke o' business at the same time, introducin' goods. I see his cards,

with Zion's Coöppyrative Bazaar onto 'em, and a pile o' tracts on religion, lyin' in his room. They went over to try and sell some things to the China stores the fust day they come, and the daughter she run acrost Choy Susan there. 'Pears she knew her of old."

"So I understand."

"There 's a kind o' scatterin' of the brethren round through here, on account o' some bein' left over after the Mexikin war, and there 's others a-formin' new settlements. They say they 're a-goin' to settle all over everything after a while, but I dunno."

"Sho!" commented Yank Baldwin.

"I 've had consid'rable many of 'em stop with me, off and on. Fact is, I had a sister among 'em once't. They roped her in, some way, down in Illinois, in early times. She used to see hull quires of angils; I dunno but what 't was reams."

"Well, how 's business?" inquired the storekeeper, affecting a brisk air as he put on his wide slouch hat, after finishing his meal.

"You know of any good China cook?" returned the landlady, answering his question absently with another. "Ten Moon 's goin' back to his own country, and I 've got to git somebody. Them camp-meetin' folks, too, 'll be down this way pretty quick, to open up at

Pacific Grove, and that allers makes consid'rable extra eatin'. Rev. Samyil Snow has writ. He gin'rally writes to let me know when they 're comin'."

"You better hustle round pretty lively, then," said Baldwin. "The head o' construction 's goin' to be moved up this way, too, from Sloan's Camp. I should n't wonder if we started, now, inside o' three or four days. That 'll make more extra eatin' for you."

Marcella Gilham was waiting for him on the veranda, when he came out. She talked a while on indifferent matters; then, as if by the way,—

"Oh, are you acquainted with a young man, on the railroad, by the name of Rufus D. Easterby?" she asked.

"What, *Rufe?* Rufus D.? I should say so."

"He is a chain-man, with the surveyors."

"He ain't no chain-man now. He 's got to be transit-man, at seventy-five dollars a month and found. Picked it all up himself. Picks up everything himself. *You* know him?"

"I have met him," she replied, evasively.

"Well, you 've met a bang-up good feller, and a smart un. He 's bound to be division engineer 'fore a great while, is Rufus."

"If you should happen to see him when you go back, you might mention that you had seen me here."

"O' course I will; o' course I 'll mention it. He often comes into my tent of an evening and chins. He 's give me advice more 'n once that I 've follered up and made money out of."

Marcella was very gracious now, at considerable length, to the storekeeper. As he mounted and rode away, she called out to him, —

"I hope I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again."

But the next moment she turned away, and said to herself mournfully, "If I have made a good impression upon him, and the letter has miscarried, this man may yet bring me news."

"Well, be good to yourself!" concluded Yank Baldwin, galloping away on his queer pony, who had no terrors for him, immensely flattered at her favor.

"Hopes she 'll have the pleasure o' seein' me agin, does she?" he soliloquized. "*Pity* 'bout her bein' a Mormon, ain't it. Should n't wonder, now, if I could convert that there girl over as easy as rollin' off a log."

He repeated many times more in the course of the evening, "*Pity* 'bout her bein' Mormon, ain't it?" together with the suggestion of converting her. Converting her to what? It would have been very hard to say. Yank Baldwin's own theological opinions were of an extremely indefinite sort.

He wandered in an aimless way about his store, with its stock of overalls, cowhide boots, blankets, tin cups, powder and shot, kerosene, and bags of meal and potatoes, distributed over the ground, and a rude counter and row of shelves behind it. The usual visitors came in, and sat around a barrel, now forming a convenient nucleus, instead of the winter stove.

An inspiration suddenly took him to move his store on the morrow, without waiting further. He should be near *her*, and would have the ampler leisure, before the rest of the camp should follow, to cultivate her acquaintance. Some mongrel Indians of the neighborhood came in for a transaction in an article of stove-blacking which they were using as a choice quality of face-paint, and this completed his disgust and his readiness to go.

"No use o' stayin' here; there ain't no business doin'," he said. Then he addressed himself to a couple of stout young fellows who had hauled some supplies into camp that day, and had a team standing idle.

"Say, you young roosters! what 'll you take, to move my fixtures complete up to the new location to-morrer?"

The teamsters named a price.

"You don't want the *job*," he said, curtly.

"The feed of the horses will cost so much," they argued.

"No livin' horses can eat so much."

"The tent alone will make one load."

"No, it won't make not half a load."

"It will take a couple of days to do the job."

"Ah-a! you 'll have it all done by to-morrer noon," contemptuously.

The "young roosters" uttered a cry of indignation.

"Oh, I mean if you *work*. And when I say work, I don't mean dawdlin' and goin' to sleep over it, the way you work for the railroad, either."

The spectators took sides for and against in this argument. The teamsters now went outside the tent, laid their heads together mysteriously, and returned with a new price.

This was in turn rejected, and the negotiation seemed wholly at an end.

"Well, I 'll raise you the five dollars any way," spoke out Yank Baldwin, in fine, from a gloomy silence. He infused as much superciliousness as possible into his consent. "But see you get started at daylight, and don't you forget it!"

He felt that feminine influence — and it was not for the first time — had crippled him. If left unbiased, he would have brought the matter to a much more advantageous conclusion.

Marcella hovered near, on his arrival at the

new site next day with his second load of effects. As he volunteered nothing about Easterby of his own accord, she came to the point.

"No, I hain't seen nothin' of him," said Baldwin in response. "Fact is, he 's off somewheres, though I guess he 'll be back 'fore a great while. A letter came for him yest'd'y, too, and is waitin' for him, unless they 've sent it on."

The girl turned quickly away to hide her disappointment at this cheerless intelligence.

Whether roused by the early start of its storekeeper, or for other reasons, the whole of Sloan's Camp got in motion the same day much in advance of its original intention. By nightfall a considerable number of the tents were pitched, and the head of construction was definitely established at the new location.

This was a deep little valley, made charming by a babbling brook, amid embowering woods. The rattle of the powder blasts in the adjoining canyon already began to resound there, from the new railroad coming rapidly on.

Yank Baldwin was not more than half installed when he began to pay his court to Marcella. He invited her to camp after supper, to see the planet Jupiter, its moons now of a peculiar distinctness, through the surveyors' transit. She accepted, taking Mrs. McCurdy with her, however, for further companionship.

Perhaps she might happen upon some news at the camp. Perhaps, even, — but that was too good to be true, — Easterby himself might by this time have arrived.

The tents, with their lights within, glowed translucent in the dusk, like some strange great kind of lanterns. The noise of the clear running brook smote musically upon the ear; the stars twinkled down over the edge of the narrow valley, and Jupiter was found in fact exceptionally brilliant. The engineer, the rodman, the two chain-men, and the axe-man had come, with a very polite man temporarily in charge of the transit instrument. But Easterby had not arrived, nor did the few timid inquiries the gentle visitor dared to propound bring any definite information about him, if indeed there were any to give.

She tried to bear up, however, and on the return artfully drew out Yank Baldwin on the habits of railroad constructors and surveyors.

"Are the surveyors usually married?" she inquired. "Is Mr. Easterby, for example?"

"If not, have they often — sweethearts?"

"Has Mr. Easterby?"

"I should n't wonder if he had had, or may be has yet," returned her informant. "I 've kinder thought so. He don't take no great shine to the girls."

"Why? Was you particular interested in him?" he broke off sharply, perhaps inspired with a sudden suspicion.

"Oh, not at all. Only it is easier to talk about a common acquaintance, don't you know."

The storekeeper ventured into the "settin'-room" at the Palace Boarding House, though not greatly at home in such places, and the interview was much prolonged. Ten Moon, the departing cook, was to "set a table to the devil" that night to invoke favorable auspices for his journey, and there was a desire on the part of some to witness it. Such a table was in fact set out, with the due allowance of rice, rice-brandy, roast fowl, and sweetmeats, and the house was up till a much later hour than usual.

Marcella after a time brought forth, as a part of her resources of entertainment, a photograph album.

"My brother, — my sister," she said, pointing out one young face after another, among whom was much dissimilarity of looks.

"Large fambly!" commented Yank Baldwin, dryly.

He was burning to attack her strange creed, and begin the conversion to which he believed his influence would render her so easy a prey.

She let fall, inadvertently no doubt, some ex-

pression about the "Saints" and the "Celestial Marriage." This was his opportunity.

"Celestyil gammon!" he broke out. "Now see here, *you* ain't one o' them kind that believes in a husband with forty-'leven other wives, are you?"

The girl sighed heavily.

"You ought to tie up to some good, strong, likely feller that 'ud look out for *you* only, and nobody else," he continued.

Marcella Eudora Gilham sighed again, more heavily than before. The strange thing about it was that she showed no resentment.

"What does it do in these here novils?" bringing his hand down on the one returned to her. "I've read more 'n one of 'em before now. Why, they shows just two folks, and no more, a-lovin' for keeps; a-stickin' to each other through thickness and thinness, through betterness and worseness, a-havin' no end o' rackets, but comin' out all right in the wind-up, and don't you forgit it."

Marcella took up the book herself, affectionately, as if she may have been mindful of certain passages that had had an influence on her life. But:

"I suppose I ought not to read novels," she sighed. "Our Book of Nephi calls them 'the vain imaginations and pride of the children of men.'"

"Book of — well!" began her companion in disgust. "Well, I can't say I've seen much o' your folks myself, but I *know* all about 'em from Rufe Easterby. He's seen the whole thing. He says the women is the wust."

"Did he say that?"

The Mormon girl started now with resentment indeed, and the warm blood rushed to her cheek.

"He says they're the biggest fools that ever was heard of," pursued Yank Baldwin imperturbably. His strongest point was not refinement, either in argument or speech. "The head men preaches to 'em that it's their duty to git their own livin'; and they believe it all, and go on and grub their fingers to the bone. The thing can be run *ad liberty* that way, without its costin' the men a cent."

Perhaps there reëchoed through his fair auditor's brain at this point sonorous words from sermons she had heard at the Tabernacle:

"In that day seven women will plead with one man to take them as wives, promising to eat their own bread and wear their own apparel, if he will only consent for them to be called by his name."

"They even make the men take more wives than they want to," continued Yank Baldwin. "The poor benighted creeturs thinks all hands

'll git a higher place in heaven. Oh, they 're too cute for anything, them sly old Mormon foxes!"

With this onslaught Yank Baldwin was about to depart in triumph. He felt that the successful end of his labors could not now be far distant. But Marcella let fall an inoffensive-seeming remark, which put a new aspect on the case.

"The greatest men of ancient times," she said, "those of the Bible, had many wives at once."

"Go way! They *did n't* though?" he cried astonished.

But she brought the Scriptures, and showed the indisputable cases of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and other famous polygamists.

This was news to Yank Baldwin, as, we may say, very much more in the sacred books would also have been. He felt himself checked in mid career, and went away in a half dazed condition.

He recalled well, nevertheless, how charmingly the color had come and gone in her complexion as they argued. Dusky Spanish Luisa, she of the raven hair and melting mouth, vanished completely out of mind.

"May be Mormon ain't no such great difference from Spanish, any way," he mused, appar-

ently making provision for the case that his plan of conversion might not succeed. "I s'pose it could n't do any great hurt, *her* belongin' to 'em."

III.

THE SAILING OF THE GOOD SUCCESS AND GOLDEN PROFITS.

As there was no news for Marcella from any source on the following morning either, and the time for action was growing so perilously short, she could not forbear once more accosting the storekeeper on the subject of Easterby.

"The fact is," now said he, "I 'll let it out to you. Easterby 's ben sent down the line to stave off a strike among some Mexican laborers, and I ben seein' if I could help git some extry hands here in case they was needed. They may strike, and may not. We did n't want nothin' said about it till we see how it was comin' out."

"And why was *he* sent? He is a surveyor."

"Well, he 's picked up their lingo some where, and has got a takin' way with him. If *he* could n't do it, nobody could."

She hurried with this statement to Choy Susan, in the Chinese village. She was in utter

despair, believing that Easterby now would not be found, would not come at all. Oh, surely, *now* nothing could be done!

She wrung her hands. The Chinawoman tried again to comfort her.

"You got more money," she suggested, "my send one more time messagy, bling light away back good news?"

"Oh, Choy Susan, I *have* no more money," and she let fall her hand helplessly upon her pocket.

"Alle lite!" promptly concluded Choy Susan, laying aside the brief mercenary impulse. She summoned Qum Tock, an intelligent youth, swift of foot, and sent him off on her own account, with instructions to find Rufus Easterby at every hazard, and bring him back.

His employer, Mow, the emblem-maker, came presently to complain of the boy's being taken away from his work; but Choy Susan opened a battery of invective upon him with excellent effect, using her English for the greater impressiveness.

"Shut up! Git out! Hire some hall! Don't you forget how!" she said, and Mow, the emblem-maker, retired, totally discomfited.

Yank Baldwin came to Choy Susan the same morning, on the curious business of asking her "to speak a good word" for him, in the matri-

monial way, with Marcella. Such a pass had he finally reached in going away after the woman of Moab. He offered Susan a considerable reward if she should enable him to succeed. She showed no great surprise at the proposition, but responded in her brusque way, "Alle lite! But you plomise you no say nothin' to she till I fix. See?"

To this he assented. He presently met once more Marcella herself, wandering disconsolately on the cliffs, and joined her. They sat for a while at a charming point where the gnarled roots of stout old trees gripped the rocks with a firm hold, and white spray dashed high up into the air as if in greetings to them from curious caverns below. They went next to the beach and found there curious large shells, seaweeds as red as coral, and another of a single long smooth stem, coiled like a huge whip or serpent.

Noisy gulls and pelicans hovered above the neighboring reefs, holding chattering conventions. In front the blue waters of the bay stretched out to meet the illimitable ocean. Across them was seen tacking a white sailboat, from the direction of Santa Cruz. Looking down towards the Chinese village, the couple noted that the junk, lately arrived, lay no longer off shore, but had hauled up along-

side a small pier, and was the scene of an active bustle of departure.

Yank Baldwin adhered in the main to his agreement with Choy Susan, but could not forbear throwing in some favorable words about himself and his prospects, by way of advancing the affair to a certain extent.

"There 's other bisnisses I could go into, of course," he said, "more settled like. There 's fruit dryin' and cannery, now. Big money in it. Or I could pick up surveyin', if I wanted to, same as Easterby. There 's your thermomyter, you know, for takin' levils, and your baromyter for seein' how hot and cold it is."

Marcella showed little interest, but was feverishly excited, in need of movement, distraction, forgetfulness. She wished now to go back to the Chinese village, and witness the sailing of the junk. Her cavalier wondered at her taste, but accompanied her and gave such explanations of things as he could find, — few of them, it is to be feared, accurate, and none free from race prejudice.

"It 's no place for a feller to saloon his girl," said he, in contempt. "I don't see what 's the use o' comin'."

Many of the population had stayed at home from the fishing-grounds, and begun with the day the festal season of the morrow. As it

was a time favorable for trade, the shop-keepers had burned, in their interiors, old clothes and mock money, which brings luck and keeps away that useless class of customers who come only to price things, and not to buy.

A fantastic drama, as long as the moral law, would begin at the theatre in the evening. The fane of Hop Wo was freshly decked and adorned. The goddess Tien How, propitious to sailors, had been brought down, however, and placed upon the bowlder in place of the usual joss. A pig, roasted whole, adorned with ribbons and gilt papers, was laid reverently before her. The cabaret was dusky with smoke, and loud with games of dominoes, fan-tan, and blowing the fist.

"*Yet!*" — one — cried the players, counting, and throwing out fingers to correspond, as in the Italian game of *mora*.

"Two!" "Three!" "Four!" — "*Eng!*" "*Look!*" "*Tak!*" "*What!!*" "*Gue!!!*" "*Skip!!!!*" they cried, and rose to climaxes of uproar that drowned for the moment the monotonous whine of Ah Wai's fiddle and the clack of Chin Moy's ebony sticks upon an ebony block.

Our couple came where a schoolmaster was teaching some children to kow-tow decorously before Tien How. He made the quaint, doll-

like figures, in their swaddling-robes of green, red, and yellow, put their small hands together and bow till their small foreheads well-nigh touched the ground. He himself, a new arrival and a man not without courtliness, smiled benevolently, and expended upon our friends his only English phrase, to wit: "Good-by!"

Choy Susan explained to them, — stopping for the purpose as she bustled down to the junk, where she was one of the most active with bills of lading and the like in preparing it for sea, — that he was a man rather above his station here. He was one who said philosophically, —

"It is better to be honored among the small than despised among the great."

He had in his cabin the Ju-pieu, or dictionary of twenty-six thousand characters. He had read in the Chi Kang, the national book of poetry, in which are heroines like the willow seen through the mists, and with brows as arching and delicate as the tender willow leaf. He taught the three thousand proprieties, and how it is polite to offer things, but more polite to refuse; and how the first person must never be used in address, but only terms of deference and compliment to the auditor instead.

But now the final moment had arrived for the gallant junk's departure. The Good Suc-

cess and Golden Profits cast off her lines; the peak of her mainsail was hauled up, and a pennant loosed from her upper gear bearing the lucky Yin and Yang, male and female principle, and another with the legend: —

"May this bark brave the storms of a thousand years!"

Marcella and Baldwin found a favorable lookout point on the brow of a rising ground. Two small merchants embarked. It was said that neither would trust the other with the control of a venture they had in common; hence both of them were going together.

Last came Ten Moon, hurrying from a final trip for his effects to the Palace Boarding House, and, embracing friends in a confused way along the road, tumbled precipitately on board.

The Good Success and Golden Profits was a vessel of perhaps fifty feet in length by fifteen in beam. She had a great rudder, with a carven tiller, which served her partly as keel, her actual keel being of small dimensions. Her propulsion was by means of a mainsail, lateen-shaped, and a jib or foresail, both so braced with bamboo reefing poles that they lay flat to the breeze instead of bellying with it. Such a craft might be fairly good before the wind, but would not tack easily.

A fusillade of crackers and revolver shots rattled briskly from the shrine of Tien How. The last fervent wishes were breathed. The junk drifted off shore. Her hardy skipper was seen to raise aloft three cups of wine of rice, and pour a reverent libation on the deck. Then he took in his hands a live fowl, kow-towed thrice, cut off its head, and scattered its blood upon silvered papers of inscriptions before him. His sailors, assisting in this important nautical manœuvre, seized these papers with avidity, and ran in haste to affix them to different parts of the ship.

There was already painted on the vessel, on each side of the prow, an open eye, to spy out dangers ahead. At the stern was the Chinese phœnix, Foong, sitting upon a rock, defying tempests.

With all this, if there were now no Jonah-like persons on board to bring evil fortune, even yet, it might be felt that the winds and waves, and especially the wild Sui Tow Foong, or devil's head-winds, were appeased in advance, and a prosperous voyage was insured.

But all at once a loud cry went up. Unhappy Ten Moon once more. He was not yet, as it seemed, at the end of his misadventures. Clumsily in the way of one of the sailors, who was running to affix an inscription to his quar-

ters, he was upset, lost his balance, and toppled headlong over the gunwale into the sea.

But a more singular thing still happened. The outcry abated, and not a hand was raised in assistance from sea or shore. The ex-cook's countrymen looked on in entire apathy at his fate.

The sail-boat from Santa Cruz, which carried a load of tent apparatus, had reached the vicinity. She changed her course, — there seemed a kind of vicious snap in the suddenness of the change, — and ran down to the spot, but was not in time to be of any avail.

The man was choking, struggling, sinking; he would surely drown.

Yank Baldwin bolted, without a word, from the side of Marcella, ran down to the pier, and leaped off. He swam with a few vigorous strokes to the drowning man, soon had him by the collar, and dragged him unceremoniously to shore.

During this performance a clamor of different order went up. It seemed to have rage, expostulation, and lugubrious wailing mingled with it. When the rescuer reached shore it looked almost as if he were going to be a victim of personal violence.

"Hang 'em!" said he, returning to Marcella. "I thought they was going to mob me,

instead of offerin' thanks. A sick way *they've* got of showin' gratitude!"

"They don't believe in saving persons from drowning," she replied.

"Oh, they don't?"

"No; Choy Susan says they think there are wandering spirits about, waiting to drag drowning persons under water, and that they revenge themselves on those who balk them in their purpose."

Choy Susan had been with her in the mean time, and told her something besides, that gave her a confused demeanor in presence of Yank Baldwin. He, on his side, knew that Choy Susan had spoken the promised word, but did not know its definite result.

The Santa Cruz sail-boat, laden with tent equipage, touched shore. A ministerial-looking man leaped out of it, and raised his hands in prayer over the abhorrent instance of superstitious indifference to human life he had witnessed. He seized upon Choy Susan and took her aside for a brief, earnest discourse. She explained, when he had reëmbarked, and some time later, that this was the Reverend Samuel Snow, of the Stockton Street Mission. He had come to put the Pacific Grove camp-meeting ground in readiness.

"He talkee my be Jesus woman again and

go back Stockton Stleet Mission," she said to Marcella.

"Mytly sell him lottely ticket," she added, in a hardened way.

The rescued Ten Moon was rowed forth in a small boat, and again deposited, and grudgingly received, on the deck from which he had just fallen. The Good Success and Golden Profits sailed away, and was slow in disappearing over the horizon. She would cruise homeward, along the hundred miles or so of intervening coast, to the Golden Gate, unload her freight at Yslas Creek, and make her next trip probably to the shrimpers at San Bruno Point, twenty miles down San Francisco Bay.

IV.

THE WRESTLING OF YANK BALDWIN.

"Oh, they don't, don't they?" said Yank Baldwin, continuing his interview with the interesting Marcella Eudora Gilham. "Howsumever, it don't make no difference to me what they think. I 'd see the hull bang of 'em at the bottom of the Red Sea, so fur as I 'm concerned. I done this just for *one thing.* Do you want to know what it is?"

Marcella did not request the information, but her reticence did not avail her.

"I want you to marry me," he said. "Choy Susan 's broke it to you. Bein' as you took a notion to look at 'em as feller bein's, and so on, and his own folks was so skulkin' mean, I thought I 'd haul him out just to please you. Now, what do you *say?* Will you have me?"

He stood before her in his wet apparel, streams of water running down in pools about his feet, just as if this were the most propitious of aspects for a wooer.

"Oh, I — I can't," she replied.

"You *can't?* Why not? I don't say nothin' agin your folks any more. I've give that up. You was brought up so, I suppose, and can't help it."

"My father would not let me marry anybody but a — a Mormon — one of the Saints," replied the girl, taking, it will be seen, quite a different ground from that so complacently adopted by the storekeeper.

"Saints be blowed! There ain't no saints about it. Joe Smith, what founded 'em, was a lazy money-digger, that 's all. Oh, Easterby he 's told me all about 'em, and I know. He could n't make a honest livin', Smith could n't, so he pretended he 'd found some gold plates

with hydroglyphics onto 'em. How could he ever ha' read any hydroglyphics even if he *had* found 'em?"

"The Urim and Thummim, set in silver bows, were deposited with the plates, in the hill of Cumorah, and by the aid of these he was able to translate them."

The tone of the young woman expressed a most fervent devotion to her creed, yet a shrewd observer might have fancied he discerned in her countenance a trace of something that was not wholly rapt fanaticism.

"Oh, yes, he was a sweet one, Joe was!" continued Yank Baldwin, suffering himself to be led away with heated sarcasm into a side issue. "I s'pose he got all them there other revelashins straight from heaven, too. He used to come down to breakfast every mornin' with things fixed just as he wanted 'em. Got one revelashin tellin' his regular wife, Emma Smith, to shut up and not say nothin' when he took a lot more, or else she 'd be cut off into everlastin' fire and brimstun."

"Verily a commandment I give unto mine handmaid, Emma Smith. . . . But if she will not abide this commandment she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord," said Marcella, quoting piously a part of the exact words of the revelation.

"He got a one-horse schoolmaster, old Oliver Cowdery, and a one-horse lawyer, old Sidney Rigdon, to help him out. He did n't know enough himself to last him over night."

"Oh, you ought to go right home and get some dry clothes. You will catch your death!" cried the girl, as if for the first time remarking his state, and thus endeavoring to create a diversion.

"Never mind about *that!* That 's all right," he responded morosely, putting up a hand to wring out further moisture from his lank locks. "As I was a-sayin', they 're all a set o' first-class frauds."

"Joseph and Hyrum were martyred in Carthage jail, and there were many more who suffered for the faith."

Still the keen observer might have detected in the fair devotee a certain evasion. Was she perhaps only fending off by means of her doctrines a suitor with whom it was not policy for her to quarrel outright?

"Oh, what 's the use o' argying?" now broke out this latter in a final way. "*You* kin b'long to 'em, if you want to. I s'pose *your* belongin' to 'em can't do no great hurt. But you don't mean to say that you won't have me unless I jine, too?"

The object of his pursuit bowed her head, in

a sorrowful way, as if this were indeed her ultimate conclusion.

"Oh, that 's just a little *too* much!" cried the storekeeper, starting off indignantly. "That settles it. You don't look like it, but I s'pose it 's been grimed into you so long you can't help it. — So long!"

And he tramped away in high dudgeon, and put himself in dry clothing.

He hovered about the Palace Boarding House again towards evening, preserving a far-off, resentful demeanor towards Marcella. He happened to be in her presence when a communication was brought her by a Chinese messenger. She clapped her hands in rapture over it, and cried, —

"Oh, he is coming! he is coming!"

"Who 's coming?" inquired the storekeeper, involuntarily startled into the question.

"Oh — a — that is — my father," she answered, recalled to her self-possession.

But it was curious that the message, if from her father, should have come by the hand of Qum Tock, the courier of Choy Susan.

Upon this circumstance, Marcella almost wholly changed her manner towards Yank Baldwin. She begun to be gay, loquacious, and treat him with a delightful coquetry.

The storekeeper, quite beside himself with rapture at her fascination, took honest Mrs. McCurdy aside with the request, —

"Say! borrer some o' them there doctrine books o' hern for me, will you?"

Mrs. McCurdy obligingly borrowed them, without the formality of asking the owner's permission, and he trudged away with them under his arm to his tent.

When the shades of twilight had fully set in that evening, a bronzed young man, alert of movement, short, stout, with a well-shaped, round head, and a bright eye, hurried into camp, threw off a canvas working-suit he wore, spruced up, and emerged again almost immediately. As he was departing from his tent, thus improved in appearance, Yank Baldwin caught sight of him, and hailed him with, —

"Hay, Easterby, old man! Back again? What 's the news?"

"The Mexicans are quieted down, and are not going to strike. And I 've got a leave of absence and raise of pay."

"Good enough! I 'm glad of it. Say!" approaching nearer, and in a confidential way, "you 're the very one I ben a-waitin' for. I want a little advice. Say! there 's a Mormon gal here" —

"Not now! old man! not now! Can't stop, a minute, Yank. I've got business on hand. See you later."

The young surveyor threw these words back over his shoulder in a cheery way that robbed the repulse of its sting, and was off without further parley.

Had the storekeeper followed him, instead of returning to his tent to pore over the strange books of doctrine, he would have seen Easterby met by Marcella, who stole forth from the Palace Boarding House, and the two repair discreetly towards the cliffs. He would have seen them find a sheltered seat at the brow of the cliffs where they were well screened by cedar boughs. He might have heard them set to talk of earlier times, a correspondence interrupted, letters that had miscarried, misunderstandings that had arisen. He might have heard argument, too, of the theological sort, and inferred from a plaintive tone in the voice of the young girl that she was struggling anew with old doubts and fears, perhaps once happily resolved.

"Oh, I *have* read, I *have* thought," she said. "*Can* you be so sure? Can the sufferings of so many of our people, the blood of our martyrs, have been in vain?"

"Blood of martyrs," replied the young man, gravely, "has been shed for every absurdity

under the sun. We are left to grope in darkness, for the most part, — Heaven help us; but we have our little spark of reason, and it must save us at least from gross impostures."

The night was comparatively dark in the absence of a moon, but the stars cast a pale glimmering radiance upon the water. The milky way, scattered in the heavens like breadths of daisies in a pasture, stretched from horizon up to zenith, over, and down again. The young girl, turning a thoughtful face up to it from under the cedar boughs, said to her lover, —

"Ah, when worlds are so plentiful as that, of what importance are we? How can it make any conceivable difference what we do, or think, or are?"

Her companion answered, holding a hand of hers in both his own:

"Those worlds are so far off and cold and uncertain, and we are here, and warm and living, and we want our happiness."

None of this, however, did Yank Baldwin either see or hear, for he was wrestling in his tent till nigh morning over his uncouth doctrinal problems.

The pair on the cliffs heard the stage come in with its boom and rattle, while they sat. When they parted, presently, in the friendly obscurity of a thicket by the Palace Boarding

House, Marcella turned to go within, and Easterby to go back to his tent.

A door opened, letting out a bright light; and a rusty-looking man, with beard and shaven upper lip, stepped forth upon the veranda, clearly revealed in its illumination.

"Father!" exclaimed the girl, with a frightened intonation. "You are back again?"

"Yes, where have you been? Erastus and I were looking for you. 'Rastus did n't want to wait no longer. The ceremony 'd better be performed to-morrow noon. I feel to rejoice that you 're going to have such a good husband. Wa'n't that somebody *with* you, just now?"

The Mormon father took his daughter by the arm; and they disappeared into the house together, the door closing behind them.

Rufus Easterby had overheard! With the alert, energetic manner characteristic of him, he now changed his course and turned towards the abode of Choy Susan. It was not yet so late but that she could be aroused; he found her, and these two held significant conference together at some length.

A damp, raw morning of fog, not uncommon on the far Pacific coast, succeeded the winsome star-lit night. The fog caught in the short dry grass, and dripped from the tree branches, shut

out the water, veiled the cliffs, and gave the looming outlines of the hamlets mysterious shapes.

Day was long in coming. When it had come so far along as breakfast time a new message was brought Marcella, with whose own mood the heaviness of the morning was well in keeping. The missive was from Choy Susan, in a peculiar handwriting she had learned at the Stockton Street Mission.

"Choy Susan wants me to come over a little while," she said. "She thinks she will buy some goods of us, if I will explain them more. It will not be necessary for you to go; she wants me to — to come alone."

The Mormon father looked inquiringly at the Mormon lover, — another rusty-looking man of the same general pattern as himself. The latter returned a glance inclining to suspicion. But there really was no good reason for suspicion, and the desire for profit was naturally strong in both.

"You can go, my daughter," said the father; "but be brief! You know what is to take place at noon."

Ah, yes, Marcella Eudora Gilham woefully remembered her pressing engagement at noon.

Yank Baldwin, the storekeeper, had over-

slept himself that morning, after his long vigil. He hurried to find Mr. Easterby as soon as awake, but the latter was not in his tent.

"Never mind, then!" said the storekeeper to himself. "I don't want no advisin' now."

He had the air of a man with a mind inflexibly made up.

He inquired at the Palace Boarding House for Marcella. Mrs. McCurdy told him that she had gone to the Chinese village, and her object. He directed himself thither with all possible expedition.

The Mormon father, as it happened, heard this inquiry, and observed its manner. He chose to identify Yank Baldwin with the man he had seen with his daughter the night before. She had been gone well-nigh an hour, and should have returned. He counseled with Erastus. The two put their heads together, and in growing apprehension set out in pursuit.

As Yank Baldwin went along, with firm front and beating heart, he fanned his purpose with muttered words.

"Oh, I 'll jine 'em," he said. "It comes high, but I 'll do it. I 'll jine 'em and git her, if I bust."

The enamored storekeeper had gone over to the Moabitish woman, horse, foot, artillery, and camp equipage, and was ready to embrace her

faith. From time to time, languid airs drove back the smoke-like mist from the edge of the water, and showed a single milk-white breaker coming lazily in, and the gulls and pelicans standing motionless on the wet beach, in which their shapes were reflected. Then it swept down again, and swallowed up alike the prospect, Yank Baldwin, and Mormon parent, and suitor.

In the Chinese village, that morning, there was rumor of something unusual. Choy Susan had been seen to go at an early hour to the camp-meeting ground of Pacific Grove, dressed in her gala costume. She wore a wide-sleeved tunic of dark blue silk, and her large earrings, double hoops of gold and malachite, while her black hair was very smoothly oiled, and held in loops by pins of gold filigree.

She returned presently, and soon after her came the Reverend Samuel Snow, who entered her cabin also. It was bruited among her fellow countrymen that she was to go back to the Christian faith, as the result of yesterday's conference with the minister. The girl, Marcella, who now arrived and entered in her turn, was no doubt to be a witness to the ceremony. The young man, Easterby, who came next, was probably another.

Excitement grew apace. Heads were laid together; then a crowd assembled around Choy Susan's closed door. When Yank Baldwin arrived, the morose parrot, Tong, was pouring out upon them his choicest vocabulary of abuse.

Yank Baldwin pushed his way hastily through the crowd and knocked at the door. It was not opened immediately, and he knocked again. Marcella herself set it ajar, wearing a peculiarly shy and blushing air. The moment he saw her, he began impetuously, —

"I 'll jine. I 'll b'long to 'em. You kin have me. You kin have it all your own way. I 'll" —

But further speech seemed to stick in his throat. The door was now thrown widely open. Beside Marcella Eudora Gilham appeared, with smiling face, Rufus D. Easterby. Behind him appeared the Rev. Samuel Snow, and behind the Rev. Samuel Snow, Choy Susan. All had a significant air. Something unusual had certainly happened.

"My *wife*, old man!" exclaimed Easterby, pulling him sociably forward.

"Holy smoke!" cried the astounded storekeeper. "*You* hain't turned Mormon?"

"Not in the least. She 's as good a Gentile as any of us. She had to keep quiet a bit, that 's all."

"Well, carry me out, and put me away in some orphin asylum!" said Yank Baldwin, in a state of utter collapse. He directed upon the illusive fair one, all of whose duplicity was at last exposed, a glance of meaning too deep for words.

"It 's all Choy Susan's doing," said Easterby, extending a friendly hand to the interpreter.

"And we hope Choy Susan will come and live with us, when we settle down," added Marcella sweetly, not unwilling, perhaps, to withdraw attention from the more exciting issue.

Panting through the fog, at the same moment, came a Mormon father and Mormon lover, with foreboding of ill written upon their faces.

THE BATTLE OF BUNKERLOO.

THE battle of Bunkerloo was fought one beautiful Saturday afternoon in April, now some years ago.

It was fought on Saturday because there was no school that day. It was fought in the afternoon rather than the morning, because the sister of one of the commanders-in-chief was taking her music lesson in the morning, and the hostilities, then begun, had had to be postponed in deference to the indignation of her professor, who had jumped from his chair six inches at every shot, and insisted upon the conclusion of an armistice.

Besides, the naval preparations were not altogether completed, so that delay was just as well or better. These preparations consisted mainly in sinking a large shallow tin bath-tub to the level of the surface of the garden-plot; and upon this the fleets of the two high contending powers were set afloat and cleared for action.

The site was eminently adapted already for

the military manœuvres. It was a level plain some six feet by twelve in extent. One of the sides was closed in by a heavy wood, a border of box which separated it from the walk. To the right a flight of stairs led to a piazza opened upon by the parlor windows; to the left were stone steps leading down to a low kitchen area. The fourth side was closed by the kitchen area itself, from which the movements could be conducted with great facility and without stooping; while the kitchen range was close at hand, in which to heat the pokers with which it was the practice of the artillerymen to touch off their guns. The earth was warm and dry, and about to be spaded up for a plantation of hyacinths, roses, and geraniums, which had been kept in pots in the house in a hectic way all winter.

This battle was not an isolated event, but was the culmination of a series of large movements which had been in progress ever since Christmas. At that time, by a coincidence, both Generalissimo Bell and Commander-in-Chief Jones had been reënforced, each by a box of lead soldiers, provided with cannon which went with a spring and shot peas. The two commanders lived in the same city block, and the war was carried on sometimes at the house of one, sometimes at the other. Finally

this sport was thought monotonous, the soldiers being only knocked down without injury, and remaining ready to be set up again as good as ever.

The idea then occurred to Master Bell to inaugurate a grand out-of-door battle with real powder and shot. To make it the more exciting, their boats of various kinds were to be contributed to the havoc. The fleet of the Jones boy was superior in numbers, tonnage, and weight of metal. He had a full-rigged ship which had been drawn by his father at a church fair, and a frigate, several gunboats, and miscellaneous cruisers, whittled out by himself.

Master Bell had but a single schooner; but she was commanded, in his fancy, by Captain Kidd and Lord Nelson in turn. He delighted to imagine her now the Victory or the Fighting Téméraire, now one of those deft, long, low, black, rakish-looking craft, such as used to go a buccaneering on the Spanish main. Lord Nelson, or Captain Kidd, as the case might be, was a wooden figure carven out with a jack-knife, and represented with tarpaulin hat, telescope, and a huge cutlass.

On the other hand, Bell's army was much the more formidable. He could throw into the field a box and a half of lead infantry, half a

box of cavalry, a heavy squad of wooden grenadiers, a tolerably complete Noah's ark of animals, and a host of empty thread and silk spools which did duty, in his fancy, for an uprising of volunteers in a grand national movement.

The Jones boy's regulars, aside from a single newer division, were a dilapidated lot of veterans, English, French, Turks, and Russians, from an old series belonging to the Crimean war.

To more fairly equalize this condition of things, a portion of Bell's volunteers were transferred to Jones under the fiction of a desertion. They were commanded by a thickset, disreputable-looking leader, whom Bell gibbeted upon a scaffold of undying infamy as Benedict Arnold.

It was stipulated also that but two of Jones' ships were to be brought into action, while Bell's small flag-ship was to be allowed to steady herself by an anchor on each side, that she might not be capsized by the recoil of her own guns, of which there seemed imminent danger.

Two rude square forts of dirt were thrown up some five feet apart, the guns were mounted upon these, the men posted behind them, and the action commenced in an irregular manner.

General Bell's artillery consisted of one brass and one iron gun of number eight buckshot calibre, another iron one throwing tacks and small pebbles, and a home-made leaden piece, which kicked farther than it carried and was in danger of exploding at every fire. He had also, in reserve, an old musket-barrel, sawn off half way to the muzzle, which could shoot a marble through an inch board. But this was ruled out for the present as against the laws of war. And indeed had Bell's father known he possessed so formidable an engine of destruction, he must have been relieved of it entirely. The musket-barrel apart, Commander Jones' outfit was of much the same sort. He had, however, an old pistol-barrel mounted on a block, which he had lately purchased, at a great bargain, "from a boy." The following account of the battle may be relied upon as correct in every particular. It is prepared from statements of eye-witnesses and of the commanders themselves, together with an inspection of the field of conflict at no long interval of time after the action had ceased.

Up-stairs in a front parlor, at the same hour, were a couple of neutral powers, as they may be called, who, before the battle was over, found themselves actively engaged also.

One of these was Miss Sophia Bell, aged twenty, elder sister of General Bell. The other was Captain Bradford of the regular army, a friend of hers. It was even thought that the captain was more than a friend of hers, a lover, in fact, and a suitor for her hand. To tell the truth, that is exactly what he was; though the object of his regards was positive that she never had given and also that she never meant to give him the slightest trace of encouragement. He had a way of looking at you with a sort of odious caressing devotion, and no doubt other people noticed it too. Then, he had a way of always doing exactly what you wanted, and everybody knows that nothing could be more tiresome and stupid than this.

Miss Bell was a wayward young person who did not always formulate just what she wanted; but she chose to imagine, in the case of the captain, that she would rather have him contradict her occasionally, and be in several respects quite different from what he was. He was not at all like the other men she knew. He had been in the war, and come out a brevet-colonel of volunteers; and now passed most of his time on the Plains, wherever that was. She did not know what he did or had done in the army, — no doubt something very commonplace. He never said anything about it. It could not

be at all like the soldierly feats you read of. He was straight and stalwart, and good-looking enough, for that matter, and well connected, and *knew* a good deal, probably, but — his waltzing — well, you never saw such waltzing! She had made him understand at the very beginning that it was ridiculous, and he had humbly given it up.

No; decidedly, there were *reasons*, — and, besides, none of the other girls in her set were married yet — and then he was over thirty, and besides — and then — Secretly, perhaps Miss Sophia Bell did not exactly know whether, in case he had asked her, she should have refused him or not. This is what occasioned her alarm upon the captain's present afternoon visit. She had heard some report of his going away soon. He was often at the house in the evening, but an afternoon call from him was very unusual; and everybody was provokingly out, taking advantage of a day of exceptionally fine weather.

She herself had just returned from a walk, and was glancing at the general effect of a new toilette, in the parlor mirror, preparatory to going up-stairs to take off her things, when the captain was announced.

She gave him her hand, resignedly, then poised in a temporary way upon the piano stool, turning a little with its movement.

"You were just going out," said he. "I must not think of detaining you."

"No, I am not the least in a hurry, — that is, I have just come in. Please sit down."

The captain had passed a pleasant furlough of three months at his home, near hers. He had hoped that it would be much longer; but it was curtailed, and he was going away. He was suddenly ordered to join his command for active operations against a dangerous predatory Indian band. His purpose this afternoon was to say good-by to her in turn, and if, — oh! if there were but a favorable opportunity, to declare his passionate love, to tell her how her sweet image filled his whole heart, his whole existence. It mattered not what was to become of him in the approaching campaign, unless he could have some assurance from her that she would think of him, — that she might, at some time, at least, if not now, come to return his regard.

It was vague suspicion of something of this kind that made his companion nervous, and sent her for refuge to an additional brusqueness of manner.

He received her small feminine rebuffs with the greatest patience. He cherished a secret misgiving that there was something preposterous in a weather-beaten, steady-going old fellow like him paying his court to such a dainty, vola-

tile, distracting young person, in every way his opposite, and ten years his junior. But, while saying that he was no match for her of course, he persevered doggedly, perhaps in spite of himself. Her tantalizing waywardness and indifference had no more effect upon him than if they had been but so many manifestations of regard.

She swung this way and that upon the piano-stool, and poked the carpet with her parasol. He sat stiffly near by, hat and stick in hand.

"Will you excuse me," she said, "if I keep my bonnet on. We have to fix our hair in a certain way. This weather makes one so languid. I believe I have spring fever. I took only a short walk, and yet am almost dead."

"It is very becoming to you to be almost dead."

"How often have I told you that I do not desire compliments?"

"Yes, it is true; but for the moment the temptation was too great to resist."

Presently, by way of leading up to his own errand, the captain began: —

"You have read some account of this late bad business on the Plains, I suppose, — the Canby massacre, in the lava beds?"

"No, — I never pay any attention to such things. I hardly ever read the newspapers.

As to your Plains, I know nothing about them. Why should I?"

"It is a great country," he returned, deprecatingly. Don't you ever like to think what it will be when it is all settled up out there?"

"Oh, I do not like to think at all."

"What *do* you like, then?"

"Oh, a great many things. I had rather talk."

"A preference which suits me exactly, as I had rather not. You cannot gratify it too much for me."

"Oh, I am not sure I feel like it now. But do *you* not like to talk? and why? That sounds strange!"

"Does it? Well, what I know, I know, and can add nothing to it by repeating; while others' talk is novel, at least, and may be improving. Is that a good reason? But I am glad everybody does not share my view, for, if so, we should make but a melancholy world of it."

"Who was the second usher at the Battledores' wedding yesterday, — that dark, fine-looking one?" Miss Bell asked, changing the topic lightly. "He was too sweet for anything."

"He has lately come here to live; a cousin of the Battledores, and in a business as sweet as himself, — he is a sugar broker."

She made no comment.

"I said it was a sweet business," he submitted, deferentially.

"Well, I suppose you hardly expect me to be amused with witticisms like that," she answered dryly.

"Oh," said the captain, in a reflective way, "perhaps you could think of something better."

A conversation by no means brilliant, it will be seen. An uneasy pause now ensued.

"Well, I am going away," began the captain again, with a depressed air. "That is what I came to tell you about."

"Going away, where?" she asked.

"Out to the Plains. Our company is ordered there at once against the Modocs. But pardon! you do not wish to talk about the Plains."

"I do not mind talking about them, if you are really going there. Do you expect to be scalped?"

"Should you care?"

"I do not see what that has to do with it."

"It has everything — that is, it has a good deal" —

"Why of course I should," she interrupted. "How you would look! Has the war actually begun?"

There were at this moment two sharp reports from the yard below, followed directly by a third.

Sophy started.

"Yes," said the captain, "I should judge that the war had begun."

"Those dreadful boys!" said Sophy. "It has been so nice and quiet in the house. Now we shall not have a moment's peace."

"Dodge back in the doorway, Jonesey, when I fire, or you'll get hit!" resounded from below, in the martial soprano tones of General Bell.

"That is what you must do when you get out among the Modocs," said she, — "get behind something so they can't hit you."

"What would you suggest?"

"Oh, a haystack or anything."

"I shall bear it in mind. It is my own idea exactly. But seriously, Miss Sophy, I have sometimes felt that it makes — that is — little difference what happens to me out there unless you — care about it."

The girl's cheek flushed softly. To hide this, she swung half way about on the piano-stool and threw a hand upon the keys with a sudden jangle.

"What a silly speech!" she said, over her shoulder. "What difference should it make whether I cared or not?"

"Oh, it makes every difference, all the difference in the world."

He took very tenderly the other hand, dangling the parasol by her side.

"I came to-day to say good-by," he went on, "but there was something more I wished to say, also, dear Miss Sophy" —

"Now it is coming," she thought; "what shall I do?"

There was another loud explosion. She started up, pulling away her hand, as if she had not heard what he said, and exclaimed: —

"Those dreadful boys! I really must go and see what mischief they are at."

The captain followed with a discomfited air her light springing walk to the French sash opening on the piazza, from the steps of which the field of operations could be surveyed.

"Repulsed!" one commander was crying, "you must fall back. No, no! you cannot pick up men when they are once knocked down."

"Everything is fair in love and war!" replied the other. "Besides, some of these were kicked over by my own cannon."

"A good motto, and worth noting," reflected the captain.

No ingenious stratagem occurred to him just now, but he took courage to await events and make, if possible, another trial.

"Come and see our fight, captain," called

Master Bell, as the couple emerged. "Come and show us how!"

"I cannot let you ruin your toys so, Jack," called out Sophy sharply.

"This don't hurt 'em," said Jack, relying upon her ignorance of the practical operation of powder and shot. "Come on, captain! Don't let her stop you! She 's always spoiling fun."

"I have a certain weakness for it, even on a scale like that," said the captain. "Shall we take a look at their forts a moment?"

Not to give color to the assertion that she was a spoiler of sport, she graciously assented. Holding her pretty skirts in her hand, she tripped down the stairs part way, but after pausing there a little, said: —

"If you will allow me, this gives me an opportunity to go and take off my hat."

"Why certainly," said the captain.

He looked after her lithe and charming figure as it disappeared through one of the veranda windows, with a sigh.

"What nations are these?" inquired the captain good-humoredly, now joining the boys.

"Rebel and Union," replied the bright-faced commander on one side, hastening up, with his pockets crammed with fuses, like a miniature

Guy Fawkes. "Mine are Union and his Rebels."

"No they ain't," said Master Bell. "At least, it don't make any difference what yours are. Mine are a lot of different kinds."

The Jones boy was of a practical turn and little invention. His fancy could no farther go than our own late civil war, of which he was, as it were, a part.

But with the Bell boy it was a different matter. He was a famous reader, his head full of notable personages and events. His troops were conscripted from all the exciting fields of history and romance, and heroes of the most miscellaneous complexion marshaled them on. Thus the strange spectacle was seen of the Old Guard, the last of the Abencerrages, the light brigade of Balaklava and Marion's men marching shoulder to shoulder, with Napoleon, Ivanhoe, Kossuth, Roderick Dhu, Marlborough, Judas Maccabeus, Ethan Allen, General Sheridan, and the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan at their head, against a simple post of Boys in Blue of the period. The confidence of the Jones boy in the face of such fearful odds was something almost sublime. He announced his steadfast intention of giving all comers, be they who they might, the liveliest old tussle that ever was heard of.

The Old Guard was a tall, stately body of

veterans, showing profuse marks of their long service. Their uniform was a red coat, yellow buttons, well pipe-clayed belts and cross-bands, and white trousers. Each man stood upon a round pedestal. They had been knocking about the house from time immemorial. Contrary to tradition, the Napoleon who put himself at their head was a tall, splendid grenadier, chosen for the exceptional freshness of his paint. He was such a Napoleon as ought to have been, rather than the one that actually was.

The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan was a dark and mysterious figure, apparently capable of any villainy and the most desperate deeds. He had originally been a lead Robinson Crusoe, and served in the early part of the action as Ethan Allen, until his head was shot off, when the present happy inspiration was thought of.

"And what do you call this battle?" asked the captain.

"Battle of Bunker Hill," said Jones.

"No, Waterloo," said Jack.

"Suppose you make it Bunkerloo," said the captain, "and split the difference."

"All right; but we want to have it like a real battle," said Jack, "so one side can tell when it is beaten. The shots don't knock things over enough. They only kick up the dirt."

"Make the earthworks lighter," said the captain. "Then, after you have bombarded awhile, let one side sally forth and charge the position of the other."

"But how can it? the men can't move."

"Put them forward so far at a time! Say the distance between you is a mile, as it was between our men on Cemetery Ridge and the Confederates on Seminary Ridge, at Gettysburg. Suppose it takes about twenty minutes to get over that ground. It takes you about a minute each to load and fire one of your guns. Divide the space into twenty parts, and let the charging column be advanced one space after each broadside. You can imagine they have run that far. They must drag their artillery with them, and fire at the enemy's position as they go. Then, if they are all knocked down, the enemy must rush out in turn and attack their works, where a reserve will be left. But if a considerable number reach the enemy's fort, you can call it captured, if you like."

The captain took a case-knife and began to show them with his own hands how to construct their redoubts.

"This is the way it was at Gettysburg," said he, gossiping as he worked. "Here was Round Top, at the extreme left of our line, and here was Little Round Top. The Confederates nearly

got us here. The ground was low between — you see. Sickles was thrown forward to the line of the Chambersburg road, where it is high again, but that was a mistake. Longstreet flanked us — so — we will say. The fighting took place mostly in a peach-orchard and corn-field. How many lives do you suppose were lost in that particular peach-orchard?"

"A hundred thousand," said Master Jack, boldly.

"Not quite so bad as that," said the captain, smiling, "but at least five thousand, off and on, in the various encounters."

"I should not want to eat any peaches out of *that* orchard, would *you?*" said Master Jones.

Meanwhile, Miss Sophy was up-stairs before her dressing-glass, holding high both arms in arranging the coils of her dry brown hair, which had subtle sparkles in it like gold.

"Shall I or shall I not?" she was reflecting. "Would you, or would n't you?"

She looked more than once at the hand the captain had taken in his, with a whimsical glance. The Plains now? Most likely one would have to go there with him and live under the *belle étoile*, like a gypsy or a tramp. No, decidedly he would not do.

. . . . . .

"But the worst," continued the captain, ac-

tively shaping away at the earthworks, "was the grand attack on our centre on the last day of the fight. I know something about that, as I happened to be in the middle of it."

"What general were you with?"

"I was with Webb. It was Pickett's division, of Virginia and North Carolina troops, that came up the hill to charge us. I remember, through all the other feelings of the time, a thrill of admiration for them, though they were our enemies. It made one proud of American courage to see it. The cannonading had been such a roar as if the world were coming to an end. Eighty guns of ours and a hundred and forty-five of theirs were playing together for two hours. All at once their side stopped. Then we knew what was coming. Fifteen thousand men advanced in column against a place where we could station only about six thousand to resist them."

"Yes, but why did n't the rest of you rush out on both sides and get around them."

"You are a strategist, my boy; but, you see, there was an onset at the same time all along our line, to distract attention and prevent reenforcements being sent to any particular point. Nobody knew at what minute his own position might be assailed. That is where an attacking party has a certain advantage."

"Could you see their faces?" inquired young Bell, his eyes as large as saucers.

"Yes, some of them, in spite of the smoke; they came close enough for that. They had a set, terrible expression which moulded all, even the most unlike, into a certain resemblance. They seemed to belong all to the same family. They came up, under our hottest fire, to within two or three hundred yards of us. Then the North Carolina troops could not stand it any longer, but broke and fled. We captured two thousand of them and fifteen flags. But Pickett's Virginians were older soldiers and better stuff. They rushed straight up to the top in our very teeth. It was *their* faces that we saw."

"Where were you, captain?"

"Behind a stone wall, say about breast high, on the ridge. Up they came, and some of them over it. But our boys were plucky as well as they, and we had, besides, our reserves. The fire we poured into them was insufferably cruel; mortal men could not endure it. All at once the foremost ones dropped or threw up their hands in token of surrender. That was the end of it, and the high-water mark of the rebellion. That night Lee was in full retreat."

"Oh, it was splendid," cried the boy, with glistening eyes. "That 's what I want to be,

a soldier. Oh, I *hope* there will be another war when I grow up. Don't you think there will be, captain?"

"I certainly hope not, my boy. It is poor business to set honest men to cutting one another's throats. There will be much better work for that bright little head of yours to do."

Above, on the veranda, at the same instant, was Sophy. She listened to this story with bated breath, and, in the end, with eyes shining not less than those of the boys. She had paused in surprise, on coming down, at noting the unusual animation in Captain Bradford's voice, and had even caught a glimpse of a certain martial straightening in his form and unwonted flush in his cheek, as he stood, case-knife in hand, above the miniature earthworks. And this was the man she had thought so tame and commonplace, this brave and modest soldier, simply because he had not spoken of his prowess, never vaunted the momentous deeds of which he had been a witness and a heroic part.

Who of all the other, perfumed, waltzing acquaintances would have encountered such deadly perils? One might lean with confidence upon so strong an arm, with the kindly heart there was behind it, and be measurably secure of defense from every rude blow of mis-

fortune. She would go with him now to the Plains, to mountains, to the ends of the earth, wherever he would.

Thus the very cannonading of Gettysburg, at this late day, had weakened another and most unexpected fortress, to the point of capitulation. The gallant captain, far more fortunate in his way, if he but knew it, than the gallant Pickett, had stormed straight into the citadel of this tender and charming heart. Like that of Desdemona, it loved him for the dangers he had passed, and was ready to surrender at discretion.

Still, a woman must not appear too easily won; that is well understood. So when, looking up presently, the captain found her regarding him with what was really fervent admiration, she pretended that it was but a casual interest instead. He seemed abashed at having been taken in the act of enthusiasm over so small matters, and, abandoning the conduct of the war henceforth to the regularly-constituted commanders, he came up and rejoined her.

The field of Bunkerloo now presented a martial and spirited appearance indeed. The small plain bristled with the men and guns arrayed for the conflict, while on the impromptu ocean

floated gallantly the navy of either power, covering with their guns their respective armies. Commander-in-Chief Jones' troops were drawn up within his fortifications, a large force being prudently posted in reserve near a bivouac of tin tents, at a considerable distance in the rear of the rest.

Generalissimo Bell's force, on the other hand, was marshaled for the attack. His order of battle was as follows: A line of silk spools, two deep, extended entirely across the plain. Behind these, to the right, came a division of lead infantry in two brigades; in the centre, the wooden grenadiers; to the left, lead and wooden levies of many a varied height and aspect. The cavalry was stationed in support of either wing. A numerous body of thread-spools was, furthermore, massed as a reserve, on this side also, along the wooden curb of the area, nearer to the fort. The artillery, after having delivered several rousing volleys from the ramparts, was taken down and set in the intervals between the divisions of troops. General Bell first mentally rode along the whole line and in a few stirring words fired the hearts of his men, then gave the signal to advance. He did not at once disclose the objective point of his attack, but strategically made a demonstration against the enemy's entire front.

While troops were numerous on both sides the fun was fast and furious. The first few discharges of the artillery, in particular, were harrowingly fatal. Bell's elegant dress parade was mowed down in swaths. A marble from the old pistol-barrel cleaned out half his stock of reserves at a crack. On his side, in return, he found means to elevate his pieces and fire them with light charges, so that the contents dropped down upon the thick ranks massed inside of Jones' fort and destroyed them by hecatombs.

But after the hosts were thinned it became more a matter of scientific gunnery. It had been stipulated that a piece should not be fired when the men behind it were knocked down and so, as was agreed, *hors du combat*, and that they could not be replaced with fresh ones till the other side had all the regular shots that were at the time its due. Also, if a gun itself were once dismounted it was not to be further used.

Each step of the way was hotly contested. The advancing army only reached the middle of the plain frightfully decimated. Ivanhoe had fallen; the great Marlborough was down; Judas Maccabeus, one leg gone, and his sword twisted inanely about into his own face, presented a pitiable sight.

At the middle of the plain the lines were rallied, as it were, and reformed in more open order. But the very next instant the deadly old pistol-barrel, by a raking shot, unceremoniously laid low full half a brigade. The fire of all the invader's field-pieces was vindictively concentrated upon it in return, with the happy result of crumbling the parapet about it and dismounting it, thus putting an end to the rain of miscellaneous material it had been so ruinously pouring out ever since the beginning of the fray. The breach thus formed offered a favorable point for the assault, and the quick eye of General Bell was not slow to seize upon it. He formed a storming party, placing the Light Brigade characteristically in the lead as forlorn hope. There was a slight historical anomaly in the fact that his light brigade did not consist of cavalry, but of infantry, and the most miscellaneous of infantry at that; but they were gallant warriors, all the same. They were the survivors of corps which had otherwise been wholly wrecked. Each figure, in the battle of Bunkerloo, counted as a hundred, to make the totals more imposing; and they were six figures all told, to wit: one wooden sharp-shooter, a trumpeter, a vivandière, and a zouave, in lead, and two silk spools.

Following the Light Brigade came a choice

body of leaden Highlanders of most steady and courageous bearing.

The matter of forming such a column in the very face of the enemy is a proceeding attended with no little peril. Before it was well over, Kossuth had his horse shot under him; the Cid, Ruy Diaz del Bivar, was doubled up as with an aggravated case of colic; Zenobia of Palmyra was blown away bodily, and only discovered afterwards in an ash-barrel. The cavalry force, in particular, were made to look, as one of the commanders phrased it, like the breaking up of a hard winter or the last end of a misspent life. General Bell may, perhaps, be criticised for bringing them into action at all. This is an arm of the service to be used only in accordance with its peculiar conditions, which seem to have been here disregarded. Still, on the other hand, circumstances are often known to a commander which justify an unusual course of action, which may not be known to the military censor and annalist.

The gallant Light Brigade buckled to the onset in the manner rightly to have been expected from their traditions. On they went to the breach; once there, the opposing guns could no longer play upon them, and the game seemed in their own hands. Into and through the yawning breach they went, hauling field-pieces with

them. They reached the heart of the enemy's works, and his camp and reserves were at their mercy. A wild cry of victory, in the mind's ear of Generalissimo Bell, rent the air.

All seemed indeed lost on the side of the heroic Jonesey, but that commander did not yet despair. He conceived a last desperate resource, one of those that, when told in history, send an unceasing shiver down through generations of blanched and horrified listeners. He fired a train. The train communicated with a mine which he had secretly prepared during a brief absence of his opponent in the kitchen, and the exploding mine blew the entire fort, and with it the invading force, to smithereens. The plain was one vast scene of carnage.

And now the contest for the supremacy of the seas began. Lord High Admiral Bell, hot for vengeance, poured a deadly broadside into his opponent's flag-ship, peppering her sails full of holes and sending a force of lead marines to the bottom, to rise no more. A return broadside from Commodore Jones split Admiral Bell's bowsprit, and cut a number of stays, allowing his foremast to assume a tendency it had always had to wabble sideways.

Both high contending powers mounted their land artillery as well, and brought it to bear upon the shipping. Everything presently hung

in rags and tatters, and every movable object was shot away. Lord Nelson, however, glued to his deck, still kept an undaunted front, like Farragut in his shrouds at Mobile. Commodore Jones laid him alongside, threw boarders into his nettings, and seemed about to lure the victory to his own ensign.

Now again ensued a *contretemps* fully as startling and dramatic as the blowing up of the fort, for which catastrophe Bell had prepared a terrible retaliation. He put all his surplus powder into the hold of his schooner, battened down the hatches, and touched off the whole with a fuse consisting of a fire-cracker string. The invaders, oh where were they?

> "Ask of the winds that far and wide
> With fragments strewed the sea."

The explosion that ensued blew the deck out of the craft thus devoted to destruction, maiming and drowning the boarding party and Nelson with them, every one. It created in addition a tidal wave, which first stood the enemy's fleet on their beam-ends and then wrecked them all along shore.

When the captain returned to Sophia Bell, she was idly pulling to pieces some of the newly-swelling buds of the grapevine, just opening out in the genial spring sunshine.

"Why have you never told *me* anything about all those doings?" she asked him in a nonchalant way without looking at him.

"You have never asked me," he returned, regarding her with surprise.

His hand chanced to be near hers as he came up, resting it on the railing, and accidentally touched it. The soft little contact gave him as it were an electric thrill, and he broke forth again with sudden rapture: —

"Dear Sophy, I love you so. Will you not be mine? I will devote every instant, every breath of my life to make you happy. I am going away. I" —

"You must not talk to me in such a way," she interrupted, withdrawing her fair hand with a show of indignation. "Where everybody can hear, too; the idea!"

"But you would not listen to me, when I tried to have you, where they could not hear."

The girl moved up the two or three remaining steps to the top, and threw herself wearily into a willow arm-chair with an air as if she said, —

"I suppose it is quite useless to hope to escape this man's persistency. Well, then, let us hear what he has to say."

It puzzled the honest captain not a little why it was that, if she were so disdainful and of-

fended, she did not go and leave him altogether. It was she who first broke the silence that followed, asking indifferently, —

"Are you not afraid in those horrid wars and battles?"

"Of course I am."

"Then why do you so rashly expose — I mean why don't you let them alone."

"Well it 's a kind of occupation, you know. One must do something for a living."

"Yes, but supposing you were killed?"

"Well, one does n't exactly expect to live forever, you know."

"Enemies running up at you with such faces as that, and horrid yells," she said, reflectively. "Ugh!" and she shrugged her slender shoulders in a little shiver of repulsion at the idea.

This was certainly more conciliatory, but the captain was only kept upon the subject on compulsion, wondering at her interest in it, and turned off from it with, —

"Do not let us talk of that now! Let me tell you how beautiful I think you, how dear you are to me! We can discuss it at least, can we not? that can do no harm?"

"Yes it can," she maintained obstinately.

"Both your father and mother are on my side," he ventured, exploding a bombshell.

"Oh dreadful!" she exclaimed, starting up

with an expression as if surrounded, desperately hemmed in front, flank, and rear, with small hope of retreat possible, — "have you spoken to them? — But they know nothing about such things — nothing."

The lover was in despair. He feared that he had committed a hopeless imprudence, and began to apologize, —

"I mean to say — that is" —

"*No!* I say, you must not talk to me so."

This now, as it happened, was the exact moment of the marine explosion below, which had consequences above, far beyond anything its authors could have dreamed of. Fully a square yard of good plastering was shaken from the ceiling of the veranda by it, and fell to the floor with a crash. It must have been already, for some time, in a defective condition, to be thus easily displaced. However this may be, it fell precisely upon our lovers with a thump and a dull roar, staggering them and enveloping them in a dense cloud of white dust.

Captain Bradford was first to recover, and saw Sophy leaning against the wall deadly pale, and heard her murmur weakly, "My head! my head!" Her beautiful hair was disheveled, her entire costume in disarray, and one hand raised to her brow in a dazed way. He flew to her, frantically brushed away a part of the *débris*,

and, taking her boldly in his arms, supported her within.

"Oh, what has happened to you, my darling, my pet, my pretty one? Oh, I *hope* you are not hurt," he cried, as he labored over her, most tenderly bathing her face and hands with cool water.

"I feared we were both killed," she said, soon smiling at him faintly. "A weight of tons seemed to fall upon my head, but my braids saved me. I am not hurt, only a little stunned."

He was holding both her hands in his, now, without resistance. Perhaps she was not conscious of it.

"Oh, if I should lose you," he went on, "what would become of me?"

She was dazed, as has been said, and this was very pleasant to listen to.

"I fear I do not understand women. It is said — it is a kind of proverb that they say 'no' when they mean 'yes.'" The military man let fall this abstruse intelligence with a simple engaging frankness. "They do not wish to appear too easily won. But you are not like that, I know. You would not wring my heart for an absurd scruple, a petty conventional whim."

She opened a shrewd corner of an eye at him

upon this, but closed it again before he discovered it. Where had he learned such a profundity of wisdom, indeed?

"I can never think of you as easily won. I can never half tell you how I adore you, how unworthy I feel myself of you, were I to take a whole life-time," he persisted, borne on in the fervid torrent of his wooing.

"Who has given you such ridiculous ideas about women?" she asked him, raising slowly at length the lids, fringed with their charming long lashes which had veiled so long both lustrous eyes, now arch with laughter.

She closed them again softly the next moment and added, before he could speak, —

"I am so glad this has happened. I have liked you all the time."

A heavy shock of earthquake is said to have passed unnoticed during the ancient battle of Thrasymene. So, too, our combatants of Bunkerloo remained all unaware, in the fury of the strife, of the momentous consequences transacting above them. It was not till the last man was exterminated from the face of the ground — in a kind of supplementary guerilla warfare — and the last stick of timber from the face of the waters, that Master Bell, running up to inform the captain what a beautiful success it had

been, learned of the fall of the ceiling and its immediate cause.

"I wish you would stay here all the time. I wish you were my big brother," he said, seizing one of his mature friend's large brown hands in both his own.

"He wishes I were his big brother," said the captain, turning the aspiration laconically over to Sophy, who perceptibly blushed.

"Run away, do, Jack!" she exclaimed, to hide her embarrassment. "You are a perfect *sight*. And I hope you see the damage you have done *here?*"

Somewhat dismayed at this unlooked-for development, and perhaps oppressed with graver misgivings as to the future, Master Jack ran away as bidden. He endeavored, nevertheless, to see if a few finishing touches still could not be put to the battle.

But formidable neutral powers were now concentrating about the field, and active intervention was imminent. A younger sister of ten, Hallie, came in from her lesson at dancing-school, took a brief survey of the operations, holding her fingers in her ears, and hastened away promising to convey a full account to Mamma at the earliest possible moment. The cook, too, — having taking advantage of a general exodus on the unusually pleasant spring afternoon to pay a brief visit to another cook down the

block, — now returned to her kitchen. She was raising her hands to heaven in holy horror at the condition to which the range had been brought, when Jonesy skirmished in. She captured him, and would perhaps have consigned him to the Bastile of the furnace-room for indefinite imprisonment, but that General Bell charged to his aid, cut him out after a desperate hand to hand conflict, and set him at liberty.

Jones now desired, as a final privilege, to be allowed to fire off once the old musket-barrel, heretofore reserved as against the laws of war. Its ramrod had somehow become entangled in the bore in loading it, and could not be extricated. It was necessary, therefore, to fire off ramrod and all. The piece was aimed towards a dahlia box across the yard. The box was split by the discharge, and the valuable plant it contained thrown into the air. The gun, in its recoil, by the merest accident escaped transfixing Master Jones, — striking a corner of the door-jamb so hard as to knock out half a brick.

Master Bell, in his interest in this shot, inadvertently laid down his hand upon the heated end of the hot poker with which it was touched off. It was with the lamentations and lively changes of posture arising from this untoward circumstance that the battle of Bunkerloo finally saw its close.

DEODAND.

I.

One day there sailed into the harbor of Washington Island, near the junction of Lake Michigan with Lake Superior, the schooner Only Son.

She was of about two hundred and thirty tons burden. She was painted green, with a white stripe around her, the paint all much battered and rust-stained; and a battered old yawl in the same colors towed in her wake. The occasion of her putting into port was found to be the hard usage she had met with in a gale off the Manitous, the day before. A heavy sea had come aboard her, stove in a part of her bulwarks, carried away her flying-jib-boom, and burst out her mainsail.

Washington Island lies to the left of the beaten track of vessels eastward bound, and not far from the strait of Death's Door. A propeller of the Union Transportation Company's line was formerly in the habit of touching there

once a week, and no doubt does so still. Other arrivals were rare. The advent of the schooner, in consequence, drew to the water's edge what few spectators the port could furnish in the absence of the greater part of the populace in their regular occupation at the fishing ground. These shaded their eyes from the sun and gazed at her, much as the occupants of a farm-house might have come to their door to watch an unwonted traveler on their lonesome road.

The settlement at the port consisted of a cluster of cabins on a hill-side; a principal dock or wharf upon which stood a warehouse and general store; and a smaller dock supporting a row of small fish-houses. The structures were chiefly of logs and bark, with rude stone chimneys. Piles of cord-wood, railroad ties, and telegraph poles, the cutting of which was the industry of the inhabitants in winter, were a prominent feature on the hill-side. Along the edges of the main wharf were ranged in rows barrels of fish ready for shipment, and others full of salt, together with empty casks lately set ashore from the propeller. Dock, warehouse, cabins, cord-wood, and the bowlders cropping here and there out of the dry grass in which grew columbines and bluebells, were all alike of a silvery grayness imparted by long bleaching in the elements. Above, but con-

nected with the rest by irregular foot-paths, stood a large white house with a veranda, the residence of Pardee, owner of store, warehouse, and fisheries, and principal proprietor in the island.

Pardee was an affable person of thirty or thereabouts. He had been a particularly jolly bachelor up to a recent date, when he had married a pretty young woman eight or ten years younger than himself, now with him on the island, and had settled down and become as sedate as could be desired. He lived at the island only during the height of the summer fishing season, being occupied the rest of the year with large business elsewhere. The house, during Pardee's absences, was occupied by his faithful manager, the elderly Mr. Copp.

The Only Son made at first as if she would have come up to Pardee's dock, but changed her intention, and anchored instead at a little distance. The battered yawl was drawn up alongside her, and a thickset man with coarse, faded beard, his upper lip clean-shaven, a complexion like leather, and wearing a waistcoat of black velvet with yellow spots, came ashore.

On landing, he gave an account of the misadventures of his vessel, bought a roll of sailcloth and some other materials, and went back. He and his crew were seen to be occupied, the

rest of the day, in repairing damages. It appeared from his own statement that he was a Mr. Mosely, the mate, temporarily in command, owing to an illness of the captain. The cargo was coal from Buffalo to Bluffburg for the Benedicts of that place. The schooner, he said, was as good a sea-boat as ever was, and, apart from the mishaps visible to the eye, she had weathered the storm as dry as an old shoe.

Towards the cool of the afternoon an oldish man with a limp, a portion of the rim of his straw hat missing, and carrying a large basket and jug, came up from the interior of the island for a new stock of supplies. Something familiar in the appearance of the schooner seemed to engage his attention, but other aspects of her caused him to hesitate.

He went into the store on the main wharf and secured there, together with his provision of cheese, molasses, and rye flour for the coming week, what information was to be had about her. When he came out he seated himself on a salt barrel and looked again. A light of satisfied recognition this time seemed to spread over his weather-beaten countenance.

"I belief me I did know pooty well dot shooner. She was de same old son of a guns," said he, looking about for somebody to whom to impart his confidences. The schoolmaster

of the island happened to be standing near by, holding in his hand a spy-glass. He was a brown, stalwart young man, scarcely less rugged in appearance than the ordinary fishermen, perhaps a little more neatly dressed, but wearing the conventional costume of flannel shirt, and coarse pantaloons tucked into his boots.

"You think you know her then, Abendschein?" said the schoolmaster.

"Of I dondt know her, I gif it up, so help my gracious!" returned Abendschein, with strong energy. "She bin no Only Son. She bin dot same old Lizzie and Lowesa. She can't fools Moritz Abendschein, I bet you."

He got up and joined the schoolmaster and entered into other particulars.

Two other spectators came down the path from the large white house above, entered the store and emerged through it upon the dock. They were two young women in fresh, pretty toilettes, one white, one pale pink, of summer wash-goods. It was Mrs. Pardee and her visitor. For the island was further favored just at present by a visitor who had been gallantly escorted down the plank of the Pride of the West, three days before, by the purser, carrying her shawls in a canvas cover ornamented with designs of her own embroidering, and had been welcomed with effusion by Pardee's young

wife. The two had been schoolmates at an Eastern institution of repute. They had acquired there all the usual accomplishments and advantages, mental, moral, and physical, which such establishments supply, together with a certain stylish air for which it was rather especially noted.

The visitor Bertha, for so she was called, had come from Bluffburg, a long way to the southward, in response to an invitation. The island was an unheard-of place to visit, the writer had said, yet most eligibly situated for some of their old-fashioned talks, and when they had tired of it they could go back to the mainland and finish the visit there. The old-fashioned talks indicated were begun with great vivacity immediately upon the visitor's arrival. The couple had not met since the Wedding, and it may well be imagined that things of moment had transpired since then.

They twined their arms affectionately about each other's waists as they stood upon the dock. The visitor called Mrs. Pardee Emma, and pulled and pushed her at times with a freedom that quite astonished the schoolmaster, who had been accustomed to look upon the wife of the proprietor as a very stately and dignified person. He himself thought of her almost with awe. He had not seen the visitor before

at close quarters. The proximity caused him some trepidation, and he had an unusual consciousness of the inelegance of his own appearance. As Abendschein talked loudly and made gestures, the ladies glanced towards them. The schoolmaster's diffidence was not sufficient to keep him from furnishing them a piece of news which he thought might interest them. He stepped forward, in answer to their glance of inquiry, touched his hat rather awkwardly, and said, —

"Abendschein says it is the Lizzie and Louisa, the boat that ran down the Allanadale years ago."

"Oh! oh!" said Bertha.

"The Allanadale?" said Emma, reflectively. "It seems as if I had heard."

"Why of course you have heard, Emma. That terrible case! The Hallecks' father was lost on her. How does the man know?" she asked the schoolmaster.

"He used to be a bridge-tender down at Bluffburg, and has passed her through his bridge a great many times. He says if he had not opened his bridge in a hurry for her, after the inquest, when a mob wanted to burn and scuttle her, she would not have been floating out here so quietly now," replied the schoolmaster with an air of great respect.

He looked at his interlocutor's face as he talked. He thought he had never seen anything so pleasing. Her eyes were blue. She had a round chin and a piquant nose. When she talked, her short upper lip showed very pretty white teeth, which had a slight opening in front. Her brown hair hung behind in a sort of twisted loop, tied up with a ribbon; before it strayed over her forehead in a becoming style for which the female mind has invented no better name than "bangs."

Women were very much out of the schoolmaster's line; he thought that he had always had more engrossing matters to attend to. He had hardly seen any others than the feminine cooks of vessels and the unkempt islanders' wives, and scarcely knew whether all were not as hard-favored as those. In the presence of this one he was inclined to rub his eyes, as if at a new revelation.

Bertha, on her side, had not before seen the schoolmaster except at a distance. She had observed him passing in and out among the gray cabins, now with a gun or an oar on his shoulder, now with books, covered with calico, returning from his school. Her friends had told her banteringly that he was the beau, the only subject on the island for a flirtation. "But I am in despair," she had returned in the same

spirit; "for he never comes near me." She thought now that he talked very well. He was self-possessed too. His diffidence did not seem to be bashfulness so much as an over-punctilious respect for them.

"Why, of course, the Allanadale," said Emma, "what was I thinking of! It was a perfectly awful shipwreck!"

"Owful, miss, dot was it so," said Abendschein, taking part. "More als drei hundert peeples was gone dead by dot shooner. Never did I seen myself such a times in dot Bluffburg aus. Of Moritz Abendschein he don't open dose schwing-bridge so quick like never was, you don't see dot Lizzie and Lowesa by Washington Island to-day not no more I can tole you."

"But they did *not* destroy her, it seems," said Bertha. "Where has she been, all this time? That was nearly fifteen years ago. And — oh, are you sure there is not some mistake? This is the Only Son, you see, not the Lizzie and Louisa."

As if in answer to this desire for more accurate knowledge, Mr. Mosely was seen again coming ashore for supplies.

"I am going to ask *him*," said the fair visitor.

"Bertha, don't! I would n't," said Emma, deprecatingly.

But the sprightly young lady went on to accost the man with a little air of bravado, of which she was inclined to repent the next moment until she was reassured by his good-humored reception of it.

"We were admiring your schooner," said she, insinuatingly.

"She ain't much of a beauty," said the mate, "still she 's a good 'un. Her lines is good. She needs overhaulin' and paintin'. I don't believe she 's had it done for a matter of ten year."

"Have you been connected with her all that time?"

"Oh, no. I only come on a couple of seasons ago, since she bin owned by the Trowbridges of Buffalo."

"We were thinking that this might be the — Lizzie and Louisa," said Bertha, bravely, "the one that sank the Allanadale, you know."

"Who told you that?" asked Mr. Mosely, in sharp surprise, glancing keenly around him.

Mr. Abendschein stated with a chuckle that he had found her out; he should have known her among a thousand.

"Oh, it was you as knowed her, was it, old party? Vell, I guess it was better you look a little out mit yourself," returned the mate, mimicking the broken English of the other rudely.

His manner showed that the facile memory of the other gave him anything but unalloyed satisfaction.

"Now I'll show you," he continued, "that you would n't know her out of a thousand, no, not out of anything at all. She 's been made over. She got them there masts in Cork. There ain't scarcely anything you see there that ever belonged to the Lizzie and Louisa but the hull."

Inasmuch as the vessel had been recognized, it seemed strange that the mariner should have been inclined to go into argument about the matter. His irascibility, however, extended only to the meddlesome Abendschein. To the ladies he comported himself with all traditional maritime gallantry.

"You were not on board of the schooner, then, at the time of the — a — the accident?" said Emma, gathering courage.

"No, miss, but I learned all about it, pretty much the same. I helped take charge of some of the bodies as was washed ashore. The Lizzie and Louisa, she was n't to blame, the way I look at it. They cussed her up hill and down dale, of course; but people always does that when they 're mad, the same as children kick a bit of pavement, or anything that way, that has tripped 'em up. The schooner was on her

course, and where she had a right to be, accordin' to law. A steamer can shift when a sailin' vessel can't."

"Where were her lights?" inquired the schoolmaster with an expert air.

"On the pawl bit, so I've heerd say. She had a lantern there with a green slide for the starboard tack and a red 'un for port."

"Do you carry your lights the same way now?"

"Well, no, we don't; we has 'em in the riggin' now. But it was n't no question of lights the night the Allanadale was struck. It was bull-headed carelessness. Everybody on the steamer was dancin' and carryin' on down in the cabin — it was a excursion boat, you remember, miss — and not payin' no attention to anything. When the schooner found the Allanadale was n't goin' to give way, it was too late for her to; she had to strike. She knocked a hole in the Allanadale as big as a house. The bowsprit went clean through, and raked the cabin, as it heaved about. Some was crushed agin the floor and ceilin' and never even had a chance to tumble overboard. The water come in and put out the fires, and the steamer sunk inside of ten minutes. It was pitch dark and a heavy sea runnin'. A thunder-storm come on with all the rest, and when the light-

nin' flashed it showed the water covered with hundreds of drownin' people and corpses."

"And the Lizzie and Louisa went right on and never stopped to save one of them?" said Bertha.

"That's what she did, miss. That's what made the folks so mad. But she could n't 'a' done no different, I say. The bowsprit and bobstays and whole head-gear was gone out of her, and her masts was a-topplin'. She could n't stay there in the trough of the sea to help nobody."

"How do you come to have now the name of Only Son, instead of Lizzie and Louisa?"

"There was a schooner of that name that was lost in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I mind the time very well. We got her name. It was done by act of Congress or act of Parliament, or some such way. You see, the schooner lit out for foreign parts after the trouble. This is only her second season back, and this here is the first trip she 's made to Bluffburg since."

The aged Abendschein said that he had supposed so, that he had certainly not seen her during the ten years succeeding the accident, while he was still tending his bridge at Bluffburg.

"You 've got a excellent memory, old skeesix," said the mariner, with severe sarcasm.

"You want to be particular careful of your health. You ought to be a-countin' currency in some high-toned savin's bank, with plate glass winders, *you* had."

"Do you ever have any ghosts aboard?" inquired the schoolmaster, by way of diversion.

"Nary ghost," replied Mr. Mosely, and upon this the conference ended.

"Oh — a — what is a pawl bit?" asked Bertha, turning to the schoolmaster as he was about to go away.

She employed with him, as with the mate of the schooner, a manner deferential, yet slightly free, as a person of such a relation to herself that there was no fear of misconstruction and freedoms from him in return.

"That square projection on the forecastle," said he, pointing it out. "It is used in working the windlass. It is no place to put lights. They are always hung in the rigging, as far as I know. Besides the lights, in foggy weather, a horn is blown, one blast when the vessel is on the starboard tack, two on the port tack, and three when she is running free, to show where she is."

"Then you think the Lizzie and Louisa was to blame?"

"I do not say so. I do not pretend to know enough of the details. There was an investiga-

tion, but of course in such cases the only witnesses are the crews, and they are equally prejudiced in opposite directions. At any rate, no proceedings were taken against her."

"But of course there ought not to have been, unless it were certain that she was to blame. That would have been highly unjust."

"Yes, by our laws, and now; but there used to be a different conception of justice. Do you recollect about the old custom of deodand, in Blackstone? This rather makes me think of it."

"Deodand?" she repeated, puzzled; "no, indeed; what was it?"

"It used to be the custom to confiscate anything that had been the occasion of death, whether it were to blame or not. It was called a deodand, supposed to be forfeited to God, and the king devoted it to charitable uses. The destruction of human life was considered such an absolute and inexcusable wrong that vengeance had to be wreaked even upon the inanimate matter that was the agent of it. If the thing were in motion the whole of it was taken; if not in motion only the part that was immediately to blame. Thus, if a man should fall from the wheel of a wagon at rest and be killed, the wheel alone was a deodand, and not the wagon."

"It is like what the mate just said of the children kicking the pavement for tripping them up. So by this old custom," the girl continued meditatively, "that dreadful ship would be confiscated, would be a— What do you call it? — a deo" —

"Deodand."

"It makes me shiver only to look at it. Just see how stolid and unfeeling she lies there after all the suffering she has occasioned. I would not wish to sail in her for anything; would you?"

"Oh, I should not much care. I am not very superstitious. She has gone along now fifteen years all right, and most likely will continue to do so. There is no legal way now of collecting deodands."

"Yes, but perhaps for that very reason they may be collected in more at headquarters, as it were."

"Is n't that just a little sacrilegious?"

"Well, yes," admitted Bertha. "I am afraid that it is."

"Oh, please do not think I take the liberty to correct you," the schoolmaster hastened to say.

He looked into her eyes again. He thought a kind and honest heart beamed forth from them, gay and bright as they were. Bertha too

began to be sensible that he was a person to be put upon a very different footing from Mr. Mosely.

"We should be very glad to see you at the house, at any time," said Mrs. Pardee to him graciously, as they moved away.

It was his first invitation from this source.

"If it amuses you to talk to odd persons, you shall have what slight diversions the island affords," she said to Bertha when they were out of hearing.

"How *much* he *knows*," said Bertha. "Tell me about him! What is his name?"

"Halvorsen. He is as much sailor as schoolmaster, or more. My husband, I believe, thinks him quite a remarkable character."

"Yes? in what way?"

"Well, it seems he has educated himself somehow in sailing around the world. He never had anybody to look after him, and never went to school. He studies law, of nights, and has an idea of making a lawyer of himself. He sails the lakes, usually, to get the money. I don't know exactly how it happens that he is teaching school here. I think he was disappointed about some vessel he expected to get the command of, and is only waiting for that."

"His manners are very good for one with so little bringing up. — But he cannot be called

very good looking," she added, reflectively. "Where is he from?"

"He was born in some English port. His father was Norwegian, and his mother English; but he scarcely even saw either of them."

"I think he deserves a great deal of credit; don't you?" said Bertha.

Before morning the schooner had weighed anchor and continued her course to Bluffburg. Her skipper was apprehensive, from the facile recognition of his vessel at the island, that unpleasant consequences might await her at the port of her destination from which she had been so long absent, and where she had been the object of such a bitter animosity. But this fear proved unfounded. Whether she were identified on her entrance into Bluffburg by other eyes or not, the only active interest manifested in the ex-Lizzie and Louisa was from a very obscure source indeed. A squalid vagrant known along the docks and in the police court, at which he made frequent appearances, as Hungry Hagan, followed her stealthily as she moved to her moorings at Benedict's wharf, hung over a bridge in the immediate vicinity, shook his fist and continued to regard her, muttering with imbecile malignity. The abode of this man was with others of his class upon a

strip of sand beach once the site of fishing industries. The sand had been carted away by graders of streets to such an extent that the quarter had at one time stood in danger of being engulfed in the lake, and a law had been passed against the practice. The constructions of a great city pressed close behind and around it, and a railroad company was ready to take the ground for its repair shops as soon as it could get a franchise. Tramps and disreputable characters had crept into the abandoned huts of the fishermen. In rags of the yellowish hue which is the last stage of old clothing, they sunned themselves on the beach, caught driftwood for their fires, and begged or stole a subsistence as best they could.

There was a tradition, hard indeed to credit, that Hagan, previous to the loss of the Allanadale, had been a decent, honest mechanic. His wife and children had gone down in her, and then he took to drink and general abandoned courses. His besotted faculties all but gone appeared to retain their cunning for but a single object, — the craft that had been the author of his calamities.

As the Only Son lay now in the river, the chips floating past her, as often up stream as down, in the sluggish yellow current, and urchins playing about her in the neighboring

wood-yard, it was hard to connect her with the wild sweep of angry waters and the despairing struggle of perishing human lives. Hungry Hagan looked long and malevolently at her from the bridge, but if he meditated her a mischief, it was not carried into effect on the present occasion. Before night he was run in to the station-house as a "drunk and disorderly," and was sentenced to the House of Correction for thirty days.

"This loafing around the docks and picking and stealing from vessels has got to be stopped, Hagan," said the judge.

"Yes, judge, your honor," said Hungry Hagan.

II.

There was little in the way of regular entertainment at Washington Island. The two ladies held interminable friendly conversations, and Bertha made great progress with an afghan she was knitting, which she said was alone worth the price of admission. In the mornings it pleased her to follow Emma about the house in a large gingham apron, the sleeves rolled up over her round white arms, and engage in some of the lighter domestic duties. In the afternoon they dressed in costumes which seemed, to the benighted intelligence of the island, of

an incomparable elegance and fashion. They laughed in secret at this simplicity, like the classic augurs on their towers, knowing well that there was not a costume of them all that was not a couple of seasons old at the least.

They took short walks. There was a rustic seat with a sun-dial near it on the hillside, to which they much resorted. One day Mr. Pardee took them to a small, green, almost perfectly circular lake, in the interior. Again, they went down in company and honored the host by a visit to him in person at his store. He received them with a humorously exaggerated courtesy, and placed a well-whittled arm-chair and office stool at their disposal. The taciturn steady-going agent, Copp, looked over his spectacles at them. The country store was cool and semi-obscure. The door at its farther end showed a bright strip of sunlight dancing zigzag upon the water off the dock. There were scythes and hoe-handles, pails, hams, and boots depending from the rafters. There were garden seeds, nails, coarse dry-goods and clothing, perfumery, stationery, hard-tack, powder and shot, jars of citron, and candy in sticks. Up-stairs was a sail-loft with a stock of cordage and tackle. All that the miscellaneous needs of the island demanded were ministered to from this single source of supply. The trade

was conducted largely by means of barter, the merchant taking produce for shipment and making payment for it in goods.

Bertha wished to be weighed. She proved to turn the scale at one hundred and twenty-five pounds. She was displeased; she did not wish to be more than a hundred and twenty. She went behind the counter and pretended to be salesman. While there, a customer came in and inquired for brown sugar. She got it in person, and expended with her pretty hands an elaborate preparation upon the tying of the package in its coarse paper with a profusion of strings, that must, at current rates of labor, have added largely to the price of the commodity.

"That makes it as good as white, miss," said the man gallantly, receiving it from her hand.

"There! you see there *are* people who appreciate me," said Bertha, returning complacently to her friends.

The schoolmaster, in a remote corner of the store at the time overhauling some fishing gear, saw this, and it filled him with a vague, pleasant sentiment. He had not as yet taken advantage of Mrs. Pardee's invitation to him to appear at the house.

"We were altogether too supercilious, *I* think," said Bertha, commenting upon it.

"You did not even take the pains to introduce him to me. He is very intelligent, as you see, and no doubt equally independent."

"We might go and see him at his school?" suggested the hostess.

"Oh, yes, we *must*," said Bertha.

"It will have to be very soon, then, for it closes with June, and here we are within a day or two of it."

"Very well, let us go this afternoon!"

The school-house was a log structure in the edge of the woods. There were morning-glories and lilacs clustered about it, and squirrels, blue-birds, and gophers not far away. Within were a dilapidated blackboard, a chair and desk for the teacher, and two long benches filled by a score of tow-headed, barefooted pupils. At one side, in contrast to the general sterility, was a row of shelves containing a considerable collection of books, and upon the top a plaster bust and a German student lamp.

The sailor schoolmaster was considerably flustered at the appearance of his unexpected guests. Secretly, he would much rather have been discovered in his bolder, more imposing profession on the sea. He would have dismissed the school at once on this account, pleading that, since the next day was Saturday, the beginning of the vacation, it was

harder than usual to keep his scholars' attention. The ladies insisted first, however, upon hearing something of their acquirements in the least common multiple, pronominal adjectives, and the like. They exchanged complimentary remarks upon such of the young faces as pleased them. Among the names of girls they found Dagmars, Amalias, and Brunhildas; the boys were Lars, Olaf, Gudrun, and Nefiolf.

"They are for the most part Northmen, like myself," explained the master, "Danes, Norwegians, and even Icelanders, though the latter are few now, most of those once on the island having moved away."

A very tow-headed boy in baggy clothes of blue cotton, with an entirely serious expression of countenance, held up his hand. His name was given as Lars Byosling.

"Please say something to make us laugh!" he said, preferring his request to Bertha.

"Why, how dreadfully embarrassing," said that young person, turning away in a whimsical consternation.

"There! Byosling, that will do," said the schoolmaster to the applicant, severely.

"We have but few visitors," he explained to the ladies. "Most of them are elderly, and are in the habit of talking to the school. You are probably expected to do something of the

sort also. The boy meant to indicate the line they would like to have you follow."

Mrs. Emma, however, as a person of grave and settled position in the world, thought best not to infringe upon the established custom, and made an effort at some remarks of her own, befitting the occasion.

"You must all be very good," she said, "and — mind your mothers during the vacation, and — try not to forget what you have learned. — And if you will come up to my house — to Mr. Pardee's house, you know — to-morrow, at three o'clock, there will be something for you."

With this the session was concluded. The pupils darted out at the open door, through which the blue sky and green leaves and squirrels and jay-birds had been looking invitingly in upon them. The boys whooped amain, and tossed one another's hats over the school-house; the girls pursued their ways demurely, engaged in the consideration of things which they had promised upon their sacred words and honors not to tell each other, and which had been told; thereby occasioning bickerings, and refusals to speak as long as they lived.

"Are you going to the fishing-grounds to-morrow? I believe you usually go Saturdays," asked Emma by way of conversation.

"No, I think not. I have been helping Olaf-

son lately, but his pound net is broken and we cannot do much of anything until it is fixed."

"How is Olafson getting on now?" she inquired next, with a sort of proprietary interest.

Meanwhile Bertha strolled about, with a dainty prospecting air. Approaching the books, — "Oh! perhaps you have something nice to read," she said, — "'The Seaman's Friend,' um, — Peters, Kent, um, — Benedict's Admiralty Practice, Lowndes on Collision, — Blackstone — oh, here is Blackstone; I have heard so much of Blackstone. Is it interesting? What hard work men have to go through!"

Halvorsen now joined her.

"I hear you mean to practice law," she continued. "Where shall you settle when you are ready?"

"I must go where there is plenty of shipping. Marine law is what I have especially in view. I have an idea that my practical experience in navigation and acquaintance on the lakes ought to give me a certain advantage in that."

"There is a good deal of shipping at Bluffburg, where I live. I think it a pretty nice place, too. But of course there is more at Chicago."

"Well, I have not got as far as that yet," he said, putting off his decision of the matter.

"There must be such hardship in sailing the lakes! You will be very glad to get through with it, of course?"

"Well — yes," he assented, rather indifferently.

"Mrs. Pardee says you have been to China and everywhere. Perhaps, then, you do not mind the lakes. They must be ever so much easier than the ocean."

"Why?"

"Oh, if a storm comes up you are so much nearer land, you know."

The sailor had an amused smile.

"There is nothing a sailor likes so much as sea-room," he said; "nothing he dreads so much in a storm as a lee shore. Here, it is nothing but a lee shore all the time."

"Oh!" exclaimed Bertha, as if enlightened.

"The lakes are much worse than the ocean to navigate. There are more catastrophes on them in proportion. Take up a paper any morning after a little blow, and you will find a list of wrecks all along the coast, and any quantity of canvas gone. Bark Speedwell ashore off Forty Mile Point; Northern Light in the Grass Island Cut; schooner Tidal Wave wrecked against the Grand Haven pier; schooner Forest Belle, main-sail and mizzen gaff topsail blown out of her; scow Pottawotamie, fly-

ing-jib gone, and so on. And then the collisions, the ice in the winter, the smaller size of the vessels and the greater difficulty with the crews."

"But *you* have never been wrecked?"

"Yes, once, in a steam-barge off Point Betsey. We had a couple of other barges in tow. Their cables parted and one of them foundered with *our* own, the second drifted ashore. We took to a fifteen foot boat, were out forty-eight hours drifting about nearly frozen and with nothing to eat, and finally made this island quite by chance. That is what first brought me here."

"And you have never gone away since?"

"Oh, yes, indeed. But it is a quiet place in which to study and economize, and I came back afterwards. I should not be here this summer, except that a new bark I expected to command is not finished. I never sailed a bark as commander, and since I have been promised it I do not care to take up with anything less."

He smiled as if he thought this must strike her as very arrogant. She smiled pleasantly back at him, admiring his strength and hardihood.

"I should think you would be afraid," she said.

"'When you have to do with salt-water you

must expect to swallow a little,' as our Northern proverb says," he returned.

That evening he accepted a new invitation from the ladies, much less condescendingly made.

They all sat upon the veranda after an early tea. A somewhat notable change was to be remarked in the schoolmaster's appearance. Instead of his flannel shirt he wore a white one with a collar which seemed of excessive whiteness in contrast with his bronzed complexion. Regarding him closer in this more civilized costume, they decided critically that you would not call him so bad-looking, by any means. He had a well-shaped head and a good athletic figure. One feature you would notice at once in his fine teeth. They did not recall pearls and the other conventional similes so much as the tooth-brush and a habit of scrupulous personal neatness. He sat upon an upper step with his straw hat in his hands, while the ladies were engaged with fancy work. Mr. Pardee remained for a time smoking and talked to Halvorsen, with an appearance of much confidence in his judgment, about some matters of business, then went away.

Bertha was inclined to question the caller further about his adventurous career. He said after a while, with not a bad grace, that he was

occupying a very disproportionate share in the talk. It would be fair now to hear some of the existing episodes of her life in return.

"Mine!" exclaimed she, with a strong rising inflection. "I never had any. I have led the most humdrum of existences. But then I am not sorry. I do not like serious and tragic things, only to hear about them, of course. I want things to happen to me just as to everybody else. It shows you do not amount to much to feel that way, but I can't help it."

Still Halvorsen smilingly refused to be drawn out any further about himself.

"Well, then, let us talk about the island," said Bertha. "I dote upon islands; you are so contented in them. You can tell what you are bounded by on the north, the south, the east and the west. It does not rack your brains like being in a corner of a great continent. And, besides, it makes you think of Robinson Crusoe, and the mango apple and cocoa-nuts and pine-apples for nothing, don't you know?"

As she wished it, he talked to her about the island; he catalogued all that was of note in it. There were pictured rocks, fossils, a mound of bones marked with a cross, supposed to be the remains of an Indian war-party that perished in the strait. Sometimes she stopped her needles in a tangled X at interesting passages and

bent towards him, holding them against her pretty corsage. Emma also took part, and later her husband joined them again.

They saw a man come out from one of the cabins below, wash his face in a pail of water, and begin to strum upon a guitar. The refrain came sweetly up to them: —

> "Tant que j'entendrai chanter les oiseaux,
> Tant que j'entendrai couler les ruisseaux,
> Moi, je chanterai."

Only he pronounced j'entendr*ee* and chanter*ee* instead of in the proper way — using a poor Canadian *patois*.

"Why, he is French," cried Bertha.

"Yes," said Halvorsen, "we have the most polyglot of populations; he is a Canadian."

"I meant to ask you the other day when you spoke of it, — were they the real Icelanders who used to be here?"

"Oh, yes; the original article."

"Why have they left?"

"It was too cold for them, and they complained of the hard work of having to fell the timber and clear the land. They were not used to it. At home they have little vegetation, and live chiefly by fishing. It happened, too, at the time they were here that the fishing partly failed. Most of them became discouraged and gradually straggled away to the mainland. Con-

trary to what one might think, they were polite, peaceable, rather small of stature, and effeminate."

"Real Icelanders, and too cold for them! Well, what erroneous impressions one forms! I have only the idea of the romances, that they were great, sturdy men capable of enduring anything. Have you read 'Thiodolf,' and 'Aslauga's Knight?' They are such charming stories, and the language is so sweet and simple. There is always a gigantic hero who sails from the high North to seek his fortune. Sometimes he marries a fair châtelaine in a castle on the coast of France; sometimes he takes service under the Greek Emperor at Constantinople and falls in love with a Byzantine princess, like his own Hecla, a mingling of ice and fire."

"Ah, yes, I have read our Northern stories," returned Halvorsen with enthusiasm; "they are indeed beautiful."

"The fighting and killing does not seem to shock you, as in other books. I wonder why they have so much of it? The writers make fine characters and seem capable of appreciating other things."

"Perhaps it is symbolical. Perhaps it means to glorify men who are unsparing of themselves and unswerving in their purpose to overcome

difficulties. That may be one reason why we like it."

While thus they talked, every detail of the scene below was clearly impressed upon the eye. The wharves, the gray cabins, the pine trees around the lonely shores of the inlet, were mirrored in the deep, placid water. As twilight lengthened into night, the sail of some belated fishing-boat now and then glided into haven like a wandering ghost.

When the company had dispersed, a light twinkled from the school-house, and burned till a small hour of the morning. The ambitious young man kept there his late vigils over his books, not to disturb the humble people with whom he lodged.

A face came between him and his page. He was feeling for the first time the charm there is in that product of a high civilization, a well brought up, beautiful girl, with all her seductive, if conventional, graces upon her head. Its potency was increased by the lack of a basis for comparison, not only on the island itself but in his whole life. It took hold upon him like a spell of witchcraft. He had had no social experience, but discerned true refinement by a kind of instinct. He recognized that it was nobility and kindly sympathy in her that made this friendly treatment of himself by the daugh-

ter of wealth and elegant surroundings possible. In his earlier youth he had been led by claptrap writings of a cheap order to believe that merit resides alone in the honest poor, and had inclined to hold himself hostile to their self-styled superiors. The present was one of his few opportunities to set himself right. He liked the tone of these conversations. Nothing very new was developed in them, but the subjects, the refinement of manner, the light generalization that often pervaded them, interested him. He felt with Mill, though possibly he had not read him, that mental calibre is to be gauged by the proportion of generalities to personalities in the talk. Rather than endure much that passed for conversation in his limited experience, he would have preferred to range the woods with his gun or sail his boat indefinitely in silence.

In some such way as this he accounted to himself for liking the discourse and companionship, but it is not certain that he was not ready even now to discover a superior wisdom in anything that might fall from Bertha's lips. He repeated his visits and presently saw her almost every day. He was welcome enough on his own account if he but knew it; but, uncertain of this, he made pretexts of bringing some trifling article for inspection, — a fossil, an

arrow-head, or unusual plant. One day he brought the same serio-comic young Byosling who had preferred the request at the school, to dance a hornpipe for them. He explained to Bertha, in answer to her questions, which is the port side and which the starboard side of a ship; how it is that she can sail within a few points of the wind which seems blowing directly against her; how sailing on a wind is more advantageous than off; why the bulge of a ship, like that of a fish, should be largest forward of the centre; and many other matters of equal concern.

On mornings when Emma was too busy, Bertha had the habit of going alone to a shady seat she favored on the hillside by the sundial. From here some small blue islands, the Strawberries, were seen dotted on the water at a great distance away. In the vicinity was an apple-orchard, too hardly used by the climate to bear any but a gnarled, useless fruit. Pardee, by Halvorsen's advice, contemplated improving it with some hardy Siberian grafts. The young girl delighted to tantalize or reward the shy calves and colts which pastured there, luring them towards her at the fence with handfuls of tender grass. Such quiet hours alone, the wind blowing softly on her cheek, listening to slight tinklings, whispers,

the notes of katydid and grasshopper, the rattle of the locust, while the heated atmosphere wavers with a visible tremor in the sunshine, filled her with a languorous sentiment. In the vague pensiveness and longing of such a time, face to face with the infinite growth and kindness of nature, a tender young heart may be susceptible to dangerous, unwonted influences.

She looked up from her book, disturbed by a strange snuffling sound near by, and there was a drove of very clean little pigs close to her. She uttered a little *shoo!* with a shake of a corner of her skirt, and, lowering their heads, they plunged wildly down the slope, not unlike the scriptural swine which cast themselves headlong into the sea.

She perceived at the same moment Halvorsen coming towards her over the hill. He had in his hands, to display, a stone hatchet unearthed that morning by a farmer in ploughing. They talked of the pictured rocks of the south coast.

"You might make a reputation," said Bertha, "by copying the inscriptions or figures upon them, and sending them to some learned society. Nobody has yet done it, you say."

"I have thought of that," he replied, "but they are rather difficult to get at. It is only to be done, by boat, in pleasant weather. I

fear, too, that I hardly have sufficient interest in such matters, when I see how much they occupy other people. To devote so much ardor to the past seems a way of dodging the present."

An expedition was planned to see these rocks and at the same time the interior of the island, by crossing to Larson's place, on the southern shore, and thence taking boat.

This intimacy may now have begun to bear quite the aspect of a flirtation; but nobody took concern about it. Mrs. Pardee believed that the schoolmaster amused her visitor just a little more than the barefoot boy who danced the hornpipe for them, or the Canadian down among the cabins with his guitar. He was only one of the eccentricities of the island. Had Emma understood her bosom friend to the same extent she supposed, possibly the course of affairs at Washington Island, and their consequences, would have been widely different. Bertha would have considered preposterous the idea that she might fall in love with the schoolmaster; but being of a generous disposition and especially susceptible to masculine ambition and force as she was, the intimacy was for her of a hazardous kind which might end even in that. Her own father had conquered his way to a notable success from small begin-

nings, and she was but the prouder of him for it. She had been reared in the midst of every comfort and luxury, and a general opinion that one man is better than another for the possession of these; but in her inmost heart she had no reverence for conventional caste, and knew that there are things far higher yet.

Had Halvorsen, too, known that he was to fall in love with her, he would have held back and gone sturdily about his business. He knew so little about it that he hardly knew what it implied; he did not know what it would do to him. All the softer agitation of the heart had been kept in abeyance by his active life, his ambitious aspirations, and his lack of social opportunities.

Before the expedition to the pictured rocks took place, a large accession was made to the party which would share in it. The Pride of the West landed one afternoon a certain Mrs. Jackson Miller, her daughter Miss Florence Miller, and Mr. Bryant, a college under-graduate and an admirer of the latter, — all fashionable people on their way to Mackinaw. They were relatives of the Pardees, and they meant to stay over till the next boat.

Mr. Halvorsen was not pleased with this new irruption. It would naturally put an end to

the intimacy that had been so pleasant to him. Still, he was not a man to make much of his discontents. He reflected that there was a great deal of time of late which he might no doubt have put to better advantage; arose doggedly at daylight the next morning after their coming, and went off in his fishing-boat.

The result was not what he had anticipated. He found himself, on the contrary, in demand as a guide, philosopher, and friend. Mr. Bryant, the under-graduate, was ready to treat so good a shot and apt a sailor with a distinguished consideration.

Halvorsen put on his best coat, therefore, and was up at the house more than ever. Things there were much livelier than they had been. There were whist, dancing, and sometimes of calm evenings, rowing on the harbor. The under-graduate, by no means bent upon keeping to himself the peculiar advantages of his seat of learning, inculcated shrill uncouth methods of cheering, and trolled strange choruses of —

> "The bull-dog on the bank,
> The bull-frog in the pool;
> The bull-dog to the bull-frog said,
> You blanked old water-fool!"

The ladies, too, sometimes joined in, and sang the preposterous words in their delicate soprano voices.

As to dancing, Halvorsen considered it a light accomplishment, as no doubt it is, but he had not spent so many years among the jolly Jacktars for nothing, and he, too, had some quaint nautical steps to show them.

It was a great augury of his success that he was so quick to observe, so quick to adopt all that was good. In respect to manners, the demeanor of these well-bred people, which he had not before had so fair an opportunity of studying, pleased him greatly. The graceful bowing of the young man, the forms of address and request, the apologies for passing in front of a person, all these methods of courteous consideration, crystallized into habit, which one hardly acquires, even with the best heart in the world, in the rude career he had led, seemed to ennoble life and fill it with new possibilities.

The only conveyance to Larson's place was over a grass-grown road through the woods, by a wagon and an old horse even less used than the road. Had the horse been younger, to harness him might have been a work of danger as well as of difficulty, since each repetition of the process impressed him as an entire novelty. The under-graduate thought good to style him Bucephalus, and so, by easy gradation, Hydrocephalus. Standing in the front of the wagon as its driver, he pretended to have difficulty in re-

straining the wild career of his impetuous steed; then he would pretend to fall backward into the ladies' laps, and was repulsed by them with laughing shrieks.

A light scattering of birch, hazel, poplar, and oak skirted the immediate roadside, but behind these was seen the dark forest full of mysterious vistas of tangled dêbris untouched by the hand of man. Great trunks, rotted to dust and fallen in the fullness of their time, stretched back in long grave-like mounds into the obscurity. The hollow clink of cow-bells was heard, now near, now far, as though sedate spirits might be walking in the wood and signaling to one another.

The travelers were pleased with a small white church embowered in foliage and far indeed from any house. They canvassed one another's knowledge of the difference between rye and oats growing in the sparse fields of the settlers. They came to the cabin — upon its knoll, under an oak-tree — of old Abendschein, to which he had retired after his years of bridge-tending at Bluffburg. To support the scanty wants of his declining years he was now a maker of wooden shoes. When Bertha asked him if he would sell her a small pair of these, as a curiosity, he replied that he would do so, and that they were equally good either as a curiosity or for working in a slaughter-house. They met

a woman of the true peasant type, with a white cloth on her head, and wearing the wooden shoes with a clumsy, bumping gait; and then they came to the south shore at Larson's.

It happened, however, by an unusual chance, that Larson was absent, and with him, both his boats. The main purpose of the expedition was thus of necessity abandoned, but a pleasant afternoon could still be spent upon the shore. The yellow sand-beach was strewn here and there with fragments of timber bleached as white as bones from long exposure to sun and waves. The student and Halvorsen swam out into the lake while the others watched them. The schoolmaster was very expert.

"You will never come to be drowned, that is certain," said Mrs. Jackson Miller, admiring him.

"Perhaps not," he returned with a smile. "Those destined for a certain other ending rarely are."

The following week the Millers pursued their journey to Mackinaw, and in a few days thereafter Bertha went back to Bluffburg, leaving the schoolmaster to strange sensations of regret and tenderness about her — to an agitation of heart and mind he had never known nor dreamed of before.

III.

The summer went by irksomely for him at the island after that. The bark, building for him by the Trowbridges of Buffalo, was still delayed. It became evident that she would not be in readiness for more than a single trip before the close of the season. He devoted himself with redoubled energy to his studies in order to quell the fiery impatience by which he was consumed, and made ready to pass the bar examination in the fall. He frequented Bertha's favorite resorts, where she had left for him a subtle aroma of her presence. A sweet ambitious hope sprang up in his breast. "Well, why not?" he said to himself. Body and mind had answered heretofore to every demand he had made upon them; why should he not aspire to this also? He sat in her rustic seat on the hillside, and the pencil of shadow moving slowly over the sun-dial reminded him of all that he had yet to do.

He secured at last a copy of the hieroglyphics on the pictured rocks, and made this a pretext for writing to Bertha. They were got indeed for no other purpose. A little correspondence sprang up between them. Bertha's family, to whom she showed one or two of his letters, agreed with her that there must be a future

before this young man. She had already told them his story. Her own letters to him took an almost sisterly tone. She was glad to have anything to do with aiding in the least the progress of a man whom she believed destined for eminence. He was an example of the force of innate character. Everything had been against him; but he had put aside obstacles and chosen the better part with unerring instinct, just as there are those who fall from the most careful of nurturing and favorable of circumstances.

The gray island became gray with hoar frosts, and grayer yet when the first snows of winter began to sift down upon it. Halvorsen's bark was not forthcoming, even for the single trip. He had counted upon it chiefly for the sake of seeing Bertha at Bluffburg. He was not to be balked in it, however, and so took the Pride of the West on her last passage, and paid his call, as a private individual and not as captain.

Bertha presented him to her parents, who liked and were impressed by him. If prophecy were anything, he was secure of success. Almost everybody with whom he came in contact predicted it. He passed his examination for the bar with flying colors, and then visited Buffalo to see the Trowbridges about the delay. It had been unavoidable. Everything was to be as he desired it in the spring, and

the rate of remuneration spoken of was gratifyingly beyond his anticipations. It would give him surplus enough in a single season to enable him, if he wished, to begin the practice of his new profession on shore. He meditated anxiously as to the most advantageous point in which to establish himself. If only one happy condition could be fulfilled, how transcendently superior would Bluffburg be to all other possible localities!

The condition was for his purpose most unexpectedly and blissfully fulfilled. No longer able to contain his mental suffering, he made it known to Bertha, and she was ready to accept him as her affianced husband. The better judgment of her father approved the connection, though involuntary prejudice opposed it. He had heard the best accounts of the suitor, and knew from his record as already made, and his evident traits of character, that he must indubitably go farther. He said to Halvorsen, however: —

"I have no objection to make to my daughter's choice, but let us wait a little! I do not urge that this is only a temporary enthusiasm, but I am sure you will agree with me that it will be wiser to take time to see. We will not call it an engagement just yet. Let us wait a short time!"

But *they* knew that they should never change, and that with this the affair was settled. Bertha had been taken very greatly by surprise. She had fancied herself far indeed from this. She had thought it was no more than a feeling of sympathetic companionship, of friendship, she entertained for him. But his manliness, ardor, and force, manifest here as in all other situations, together with a tenderness she had never seen in him before, irresistibly prevailed.

"Only to think," she said, "that to this day you have never even been introduced to me."

"If my other short-comings could but be as easily remedied?" he replied.

Mrs. Emma pronounced this sequel to the pleasant summer on the island the most astounding thing, for a girl of Bertha's position, she had ever heard of.

"There was once a girl, by the name of Sally Cary, who went back on George Washington, and she made a great mistake," was the good-humored reply of her husband. "I should not wonder if we were all prouder to know the schoolmaster some day than he to know us. What is there now to keep him under?"

Probably the ex-schoolmaster was at this time nearly at his very best. He was cheerful and self-possessed, knowing that force wins. The world is so importunate to have its labori-

ous work done by proxy that if one but assert his ability with sufficient confidence it is confided to him. If in addition he be really competent, he need never want for remunerative employment. His taste and assiduity had given him culture, his observation manners, his hardships insight, and his successes a confidence which had not yet degenerated, as the danger is in this sort of character, into a petty narrowness and vain self-glorification.

On departing after this visit, it was with the expectation of returning in the spring, now not far away, in his new vessel. Bertha was to go down to see her. This was to be quite a different thing from knocking about the lakes in the ordinary style of craft. A fine large bark, and he the sole commander of her, — this was respectable enough to be made known to anybody without the least objection.

The coasts of the great lakes are "a stepmother to ships," a vast inhospitable stretch of shore in which there is little escape for vessels from the fury of the elements. Nature has made no original provision for commerce upon them. The deficiency has had to be remedied by man. The mouths of the small deep rivers upon which, as a rule, the settlements are founded, have been utilized for harbors, long, stout breakwater piers being extended from

them to deep water. The entrance to the breakwaters offers but a narrow mark to the steersman, and is not effected without many a mishap, and, in rough weather, even many a wreck.

But once within, the harassed vessel glides up to her moorings in the heart of the town as if upon a canal of oil. Bridge after bridge opens, and shuts behind her, mocking with a superfluity of safety the wild storms snarling without. Thus it was at Bluffburg, with the rest.

Navigation opened early in the succeeding spring. Captain Halvorsen was announced as the first skipper of the season through the Straits of Mackinaw.

An early opening to the season is, on the whole, unfavorable. Uncertain and dangerous weather counteracts the advantage of the lengthened freighting period. The winter's ice, broken up but not dissipated, drifts in vast arctic fields, in which vessels are often involved, delayed, and seriously imperiled. It returns again to blockade harbors from which it had long since vanished.

Our young captain, gazetted first through the Straits, thought little of the accustomed obstacles of the season. The movement and action brought him ever nearer to the dear goal upon

which his fancy was fixed. With a far-off reminiscence of the spirit of his Berserker ancestors, he relished even the storm and the conflict. Perhaps he heard in its rage and the crackling of the ice about him something as of the joyous whistling of the spears which Swatulf and the son of Asmundur hurled at each other across the northern waters. Sometimes again, of still nights, he found himself amid a field of ice-cakes, all grating together with a noise like that of the boughs of a forest, and shining in the moonlight like scales of silver armor.

He had written to Bertha of the progress of his bark, about her spars, her beautiful lines, and the bottle of Burgundy which had been broken over her head at the launching, when she was christened the Trowbridge Brothers. He said he was proud of her, and perhaps it would be harder for him to leave the water at last than he had thought.

But it was not the Trowbridge Brothers that was first through the Straits, though Halvorsen was the captain named. On the contrary, it was the schooner Only Son.

"Oh, I am afraid, I am afraid," said Bertha, when she knew of this.

"It is nothing, little land-lubber," the captain assured her on his arrival. "I do not like it myself, of course; but the bark is not yet

fully rigged, and the Trowbridges were anxious to get the schooner around for the first cargoes. They asked me to do it while I was waiting, and I could not very well refuse. It is only for this one trip."

"But how could you, after what we heard last summer at the island? Oh, if anything should happen to you!"

"Nonsense! You will think it arrogant, no doubt, but I have a certain belief in my star. I cannot realize, for instance, that anything could happen to me, that I could die, before — well, until I have accomplished something important. Do you ever feel that way? I can see perfectly how other people, you know, can be run over, blown up, thrown down embankments, and the like, before they have had a chance; but in my own case I simply do not believe it. Most absurd, is it not?"

"No, I like it."

But still she thought ruefully of the Only Son. Her heart yearned over her lover when he went away. His eye, too, was moist at the proofs she gave him of her affection. What had he done in so brief a time to draw upon him the delicious tenderness of this good and charming creature?

The Only Son was chartered, and loaded with wheat for Buffalo, at once. She had already

been repainted and put in better order, but the same Hungry Hagan did not fail to recognize her in her improved guise, and dimly conceived it as a new injury, invented for the purpose of throwing him off the scent. He found means of approaching her, and even, it was afterwards said, of going below. In subsequent investigations, too, which became necessary, it was found that large auger holes had been bored in her, and only partially stopped with plugs.

The captain came briskly aboard, a tug made fast, the bridges opened, and the people upon them, though delayed in their passage, looked down amiably at the stir in the river, hailing it as tangible evidence of the ending of the long, inclement winter. The breeze without was light, but favorable. The tug cast off her towlines beyond the piers, and the Only Son was soon hull down over the horizon.

Bertha watched her from the high bluff, the pride and favored promenade of the city. The water near the shore had the turbid appearance it takes when stirred to the depths by the storms of early spring and fall. Beyond, it rose in a single broad blue plane, like the breadth of painted canvas with which the sea is shown in the scenery of theatres. In the evening Bertha walked the bluff again. The wind had shifted to the northwest, and

brought back some ice; and a large ring was forming about the moon. When she went to bed a few snow-flakes had fallen. She awoke later in the night. The moonlight no longer lay, as it had done, in a misty bar on the floor of her chamber. It was pitch dark; the wind blew a gale; the dashing of the waves was borne distinctly to her ears, far as was her comfortable home from the shore. Sitting up in bed, in the white robes of her innocent maidenly slumbers, she clasped her hands together and raised an affrighted prayer to Heaven.

At that hour the serious, the tragic things of life, of which she had had so little experience, were very near to her.

At that hour the Only Son, after a vain endeavor to beat off, was driving ashore under bare poles. Her anchor, put out at half a mile from land, dragged bottom and was of no avail. It perhaps but served to render the shock of the breaking waves against her the more violent. The decks were slippery with ice and snow, and every rope and miscellaneous projection was coated with a savage mail. Masses of floating ice smote and ground against her heavily. Her lights were properly displayed, red to port and green to starboard, and her fog-horn blown continually. There was no remissness now; all the puny precautions of the code were taken,

but the elements laughed them to scorn. There was no help; nothing mortal could give help in such a night.

The light-keeper saw the schooner driving straight upon his pier, and close at hand. He thought she was mad enough to be attempting to make port.

"Hard down! hard down!" he shouted with his hoarse trumpet, again and again through the darkness.

But there was no helmsman to attend his directions. She was coming on stern first; he might as well have talked to his light station, shivering and rocking above him on its iron supports.

She struck. The deck load rattled out upon the breakwater like hail. Her mainmast broke off like a pipe-stem, and toppled over, with all its rigging, smashing panes of glass in the keeper's house. She partially righted after this, drove along the side of the pier, cleared it, went to the southward, and settled at last upon a bar. Some of the crew had escaped to the pier; the rest sought safety in the rigging, through which the sea swept full at every wave. At the first gray of daylight they were discovered, but it was nine o'clock before a scow could be drifted out to them and the half dead survivors taken off.

Two, the captain and cook, had swum for the shore earlier, but only the cook ever reached it. It was in evidence before a coroner's jury that Captain Halvorsen had said to this man on the vessel, —

"I can't hold on any longer, Charley; I am going to swim for the shore."

"Them was his very words, so they was," said the cook.

He was an evil-looking fellow, and for a long time afterward appeared to be in ample funds, unearned in any regular occupation.

This report was probable enough. But when the stiff, stark body of the captain came to be found, sorely wounded, stripped of all its valuables, and clad in a heavy overcoat, mittens and mufflers, of which he would certainly have divested himself if it had been his intention to swim, there were those who had grave misgivings. Still, what could a coroner's jury of honest men, anxious, too, to get back to their business, do in the way of prying into the mysteries of that wild night? The wounds might have been produced by the floating ice; and as to valuables, it was not certain just what the captain had had, and then again they might have been taken from the body by those who first discovered it.

Bertha came with her father, in the heaviest

of sable garments, to the funeral. The ceremony was conducted from an inn much frequented by mariners, to which the remains had been brought for the greater convenience. It was by the river side, with a balcony hanging above the not over clean flood, from which it shrunk back as if in a certain repulsion. The girl laid flowers upon the poor stiff dead face. She gave way to no demonstrative grief before the public; but the respectable man who kept the place said, looking at her with awe, —

"The heart breaks me to see such a case like dose."

The playful young girl, enamored only of what was bright and sunny in life, developed now qualities for which she had never been given credit. They were noble and womanly and lovable; but alas! it was the ending of youth, the beginning of a new and heavier existence. There is a time for all things. The fruit is savory and wholesome, the timber has many precious uses, the sere and yellow leaves of autumn fertilize the ground, the dry sticks are useful to cast into the fire; but ah! why must the perfumed blossom fade?

The sea went down; winter vanished, the spring returned with a new access of brightness. The commerce of the port came and went peacefully upon the wide blue flood. Curious specta-

tors rowed out to the wreck and passed among its tangled spars and rigging. The wheat comprising its cargo covered the water in an expansive golden area, and floated in, forming long wind-rows upon the beach.

Hungry Hagan, in dog-like competition with his neighbors, on his sand beach gathered it up with a trembling alacrity. It was entirely in accordance with his views that this gift of Providence for the benefit of the deserving poor should have been cast up at his very door. Could the ancient Lizzie and Louisa have been put to a more fitting use, at last, than to contribute to the comfort of this honest man who had suffered so much by her fault?

BRAXTON'S NEW ART.

I.

THE lively "Bob" and "Gus" were skylarking in the wide, comfortable hall. It was the hour following the Washington afternoon dinner, a repast which has something of a place of its own, unlike the general run of dinners elsewhere. Its time is fixed by the exigencies of the public business of the United States of America.

The scene of the sports was a Washington boarding-house, somewhat different from ordinary boarding-houses. It had once been a private mansion of dignity and state. Its hall was provided with old-fashioned hair-cloth sofa and chairs, and a square platform staircase mounted at the back. Without, its front, in a bulged or curved pattern, was of old red brick, upon which the sun shone genially. A clustering wistaria vine climbed nearly to its cornice, and above the cornice peeped the tops of some slated dormer windows. The whole was of a certain warm

and friendly air, well borne out by the condition of things within.

There were few transient comers among the inmates. The tone was fixed by a pleasant set of people of Southern affinities and sufficient means who had been there time out of mind, and talked in a drowsy way about the superiority of the past and the degeneracy of the present day. Retired Mr. Boltwood, that gentleman and lawyer of the old school, once of Alexandria, boasted of having been the intimate of Henry Clay. The Dunsmore family, of the Eastern Shore, Maryland, had had daughters married, and Mr. Greenway, of Prince George's County, buried his wife from there.

The habits of the house were set by the part of its occupants engaged in official business, and its routine of life ticked with the clocks in government offices. This part comprised Congressmen who came down from the Capitol to rehearse at table — sometimes imprudently, perhaps — the run of the doings of national moment at the day's session. There were upper private secretaries and clerks of committees, and there were important functionaries from the War, State, and Interior departments.

And tucked into a modest nook among these more worshipful personages was one gentle and pleasing young woman, a pretty Treasury girl,

who counted fractional currency in the Bureau of Redemption.

Then there were "the boys," a group of irrepressible fellows, sons of the house, all as yet under twenty-one, but a part already in the government employ, and the rest prepared to enter it, after the usual destiny of Washington youth.

Bob and Gus, skylarking as aforesaid, were now joined by one Aleck, displaying an open note of invitation.

"Oh, hush!" said Aleck, in accent and phrase certainly never acquired above Mason and Dixon's line. "Are you all going to the Postmaster-General's blow-out on the tenth?"

"You should n't say 'blow-out'; it 's bad French," returned Bob severely, producing a similar note of invitation.

Gus produced a third in turn, and began to execute a double-shuffle of pleased anticipation.

"Terrapin!" he exclaimed; "oh, no. Champagne! oh, no; not any."

"I 'll dance you for the cup," said Aleck, joining him in this athletic exercise.

But Bob, by pushing smartly against them, managed to overthrow them both from their balance and send them sprawling upon the hair-cloth sofa. They were rising to wreak a proper vengeance for this, when there entered brusquely

a fourth member of the clique, in the person of Morris Howe, son of the quiet Mr. Howe of the Light-house Board.

"Stop raising Cain! I shall have to disinherit all you boys," he began. "Why were n't you on the Avenue this afternoon? Every pretty girl in town was out."

The others now paused to listen with interest to what he might have to report.

"By the way," he went on, "I saw old man Braxton ambling along in the crowd and looking at the people. First time I 've ever seen him outside the house since he 's been here."

"Oh, you 'd see him if you traveled around the outskirts of town, as I used to do when I had my horse," said Aleck. "I used to ride across the Long Bridge over Georgetown way, and out to old Rock Creek Church and the Soldiers' Home. I 've met him mooning about at all those places. Seemed to be examining the rocks and brooks, sampling the leaves, and so on. I passed him once leaning on the fence at the cross-road out there by Mount Pleasant, and looking across at the city as fixed as if he never meant to stir again."

"What does he do?" asked Morris. "He certainly is not in any of the departments, since he is never at breakfast before nine, and I always hear him in his room when I get back at

three. I hear him nights too. I believe eating and sleeping are no great objects with him anyway."

"He 's prospecting for a gold-mine," suggested one.

"Or inventing a patent medicine," said another.

"I would n't wonder if it *was* a patent medicine," said Gus. "He used to bring in all sorts of curious-looking traps, thingumbob bottles with crooked spouts and handles to them sticking out of his pockets. Don't you all remember?"

"I thought it was a drug store he must be keeping somewhere, one while," said Morris. "I 've smelled drug-store odors from his room sometimes, when the door was ajar a crack, strong enough to knock you into the middle of next week."

"But then he has drawing and painting traps in there too. I caught sight of those one day," added Gus.

"Say we ask Miss Mary Dale," suggested Aleck. "She can get it out of him if anybody can. She 's probably the only soul in the house he has ever spoken to. I saw him give her some sort of a curious plant he brought in one day. Oh, she 's a sly one, with that sweet, winning way of hers."

"If he 's getting up a patent medicine," said Bob, "Miss Mary Dale had better go for him. There 's big money in it. It 's about time she stopped wasting herself on that Treasury Department; it 's hard lines for a girl."

"Who is taking my name in vain?" asked a pleasant feminine voice.

Kindly Mrs. Commander Glenham — for whose relief a bill was now pending in Congress, the commander having imprudently laid out his private funds for government account, before his death, of a sudden fever, in the China seas — appeared at the head of the dining-room stairs. She had under her wing a younger companion, Miss Mary Dale. It was this latter who spoke.

She was quite a charming person, of perhaps three and twenty, with brown eyes, of the kind a certain Oriental poet has described as like the sparkle of fountains in autumn. She was dressed in modest black; seemed to pant a little from the exertion of mounting the stairs, — though she was a slender figure enough, — and carried in her hand a plate on which were an orange and some cakes.

The two ladies came forward together on their way toward the drawing-rooms, and Miss Mary Dale, taking courage apparently from her companionship, demanded further of the boys, with

a sweet assumption of authority added to a natural manner of prepossessing refinement, to know what had been said of her. They were all evidently on excellent terms.

"'Deed it was not I. 'Deed I said nothing," responded the disingenuous Bob.

Gus, by way of a diversion, upon this, seized the orange from her plate, balanced it on one finger, and tossed it to Aleck, saying: —

"Presto! change! All done by sleight of hand, ladies and gentlemen, and perfectly simple when you understand the process."

Miss Dale appealed against her despoilers, to her protecting matron. "It is of a peculiar kind," she said, "and Mrs. Glenham has just given it to me."

"My time, my purse, my honor, my life itself, are at your disposal, Miss Mary," said Bob, into whose possession the fruit had now come, "but not this luscious product of the tropic climes. I want it for myself."

"Ah, I know the boys of old," sighed Mrs. Commander Glenham, in a smiling despair.

They were passing on, to leave the romping coterie hopelessly to its own devices, when the front door once more opened, and he who had been a recent subject of conversation entered.

"Ah! here is Mr. Braxton," said Miss Dale, addressing herself under the inspiration of the

moment, with a kind of shy or demure bravado, to this recluse individual. "Perhaps *he* will help us. Please make the boys give me back my orange, Mr. Braxton? They are so bad."

The latter were tantalizingly playing at ball with it just out of range above her head. "Old man" Braxton — extraordinary thing that it was for him, who had scarcely seemed to remark even the existence of most of his fellow-occupants — suddenly entered into the spirit of the occasion. He caught the coveted object with a kind of awkward dexterity, as it passed near him, and with a bow returned it to its owner.

"Thank you so much!" said the young woman. "You are an admirable champion. I shall appeal to you again when I have wrongs to be redressed."

"I shall always be at your service," replied the austere Mr. Braxton, with another bow, most courteous and urbane in intention, but still very stiff and constrained.

The ladies proceeded on their way, and after a moment Mrs. Glenham went to her room above stairs. In the parlor Miss Mary Dale encountered the severe glances of Mrs. Chisholm of Montgomery, a somewhat snappish, eccentric matron, who did not approve of her. She bore these as meekly as possible, and, go-

ing to the piano in a corner, sat down at it and began to finger softly the Bluebeard Lancers.

Mrs. Chisholm did not approve of her, partly because she seemed to have no cousins of superior note, even in the third or fourth degree, and partly because of her peculiar situation in the house. The young Treasury girl clerk was there under the general ægis rather than that of any one in particular. A patroness who had brought her and been her chaperon, in the first instance, had been obliged to depart long before, and had left her to her own resources. Even the influential senator through whom she had procured her place (at sixty dollars a month) in the Redemption Bureau was dead. Should superior interest now be made, the situation might, no doubt, at any time be taken from her and conferred upon another applicant. This last was a reflection, in fact, by which Miss Mary Dale herself was not a little troubled.

Mrs. Chisholm sometimes chose to speak of her, confidentially, as even a *dangerous* person. Mrs. Chisholm's theory of her was that neither her father (who was united to an exceedingly amiable second wife) nor relatives, who would otherwise have offered her a home, could endure her bad temper, but had, on the contrary, been obliged to send her away.

But Mrs. Chisholm's opinions, after all, carried no great weight in the house. The pretty Treasury girl was, in fact, the daughter of a refined family of Pennsylvania, thrown upon her own exertions for support by some of those calamities into which it is not necessary to go, but which happen even in the most excellent of families. She had chosen the present form of livelihood — the opportunity offering — in preference to the alternative of school-teaching. She was elastic and hopeful of nature, turning instinctively to the brighter side; blithe and gently gay of disposition; frank, conscientious, and industrious in a score of little feminine ways. She was a ray of genuine sunshine in the house. She had conciliated to herself friends there, after the loss of her own backing. Mrs. Commander Glenham stood by her. Mrs. Stone, the landlady, cherished her, and they two had not a few confidences together. Stylish Miss Wheelright, daughter of the Congressman of that name, when she was there, hung about her admiringly on the most equal of terms. Even Mrs. Chisholm's own niece sought the company of the disapproved-of one, and had many a frown of discontent at the injunctions which would have debarred her from it. Miss Mary Dale, by prescriptive right, had come to enjoy a position somewhat like that

of the boys (between whom and herself was a sort of half-sisterly sentiment), as a child of the house; and she might much less easily have been spared than some of the more important inmates.

The incident above described had no special significance, further than that it served to break the ice and pave the way to a better acquaintance with "old man" Braxton.

That gentleman, now about to ascend the stairs, was politely invited by the boys to stop and "take a smoke." The request was seconded by Colonel Brand, the chief disbursing officer of the Bureau of Ethereal Claims, a veteran soldier and smoker, who at the same time took his customary chair in a corner, and proffered a cigar.

Mr. Braxton, following a first impulse, declined, but then hesitated, turned back, accepted, and sat down at one end of the hair-cloth sofa.

He did everything uneasily, and sometimes with a constraint painful to witness. It seemed bound up with some brooding melancholy, however, rather than with any suspicion of a purpose to conceal actions that might not be honorably known. He was a man under thirty, and yet perhaps appeared older. His sad expression, somewhat rounded shoulders, heavy

gait, and a certain carelessness in dress, though it was scrupulously neat, and his total lack of ardor in small concerns like their own, had moved the boys to confer upon him their sobriquet.

They were no respecters of persons nor things. From the hall they often carried the milder forms of romping into the parlor, and talked to the younger ladies there, in their own parlance, "like a father" and "like a Dutch uncle." They had seen "old man" Braxton passing mysteriously in and out among them for some months, carrying curious utensils and acting in a way like nobody else. They were gentlemanly, and a prying curiosity was tabooed from their simple code of morals. Nevertheless it was but natural they should like to know what manner of man he was, and what was going on. The subject grew in interest as they turned their attention to it. With the brisk confidence of their years, they set to work to make his acquaintance and find him out.

It transpired incidentally in this interview that Scott Braxton was a graduate, many years back, of the University of Virginia; that he had once crossed the Plains with a surveying party; that he had come to Washington because he liked the climate. He was also of a

Virginia family which Mrs. Chrisholm, the genealogist, commented on with favor.

"Saw you on the Avenue this afternoon," said Morris, passing a light.

"Yes, I was there. I went to see the landscapes at Radfield's picture-store. It is too seldom we see good pictures here."

Ah, pictures were a principal interest with him, then? It was this that had drawn him out of his shell to-day? the boys reflected. But then the bottles?

"Wish *I* could paint," said Bob, artfully. "I've seen you at it, you know."

"I would hardly advise anybody to," said Mr. Scott Braxton. "There are so many of great merit even in this country, to say nothing of the excellence of the Europeans, that the prospect for anybody without talent of the highest order is far from encouraging." He sighed. "Not that I mean to reflect upon the kind of talent you would no doubt possess," he added pleasantly.

Colonel Brand, who had sedate opinions, between his puffs of smoke, on almost all subjects, threw in a hopeful remark from his corner about the future of American art.

"The only hope of — of some people," returned Braxton, "is in some startling new invention, some inspiring discovery, to change

the whole face of things. What if new theories of color were demonstrated?" he said, moving about excitedly in his chair. "That is — what if some person of our own country, of this — of these times should do it?"

Miss Dale was heard singing in the parlor at this moment a ballad to a slow, plaintive waltz measure, —

> "When the leaves begin to turn,
> And the summer days are done;
> When the roses fade and die" —

Whether it was this that recalled Scott Braxton to something he had forgotten, or only that he had caught himself being run away with, he finished his speech lamely, blushed, and said he thought he had better go up-stairs and look after his fire.

The boys exchanged glances and whistled shrewdly to themselves. His fire — at the beginning of June?

II.

When "old man" Braxton reached his room, he applied the key to an intricate private lock he had caused to be placed upon the door, entered, sat down upon a rather quaint, chintz-covered chair, and gazed at his own troubled face in a mirror by the window, before which he chanced to find himself.

He had chosen this apartment in the attic, illumined by a large dormer window, for the better light and the privacy. He admitted to it none but himself, and was here carrying on a singular labor.

"To work!" he said, — "to work! I was losing time in unprofitable gossip. What has come over me to-day?"

But again his despondent face in the glass arrested him.

"I certainly need success in this," he said. "What else is left to me? I must, I *will* succeed, or there is no justice in heaven. It is a beautiful world; am I to have no part in it? Have I my aspirations for fame, for love, for happiness, like the rest, only to be forever balked in them? I have been honest, I have worked, I have injured no man knowingly. Bah, Pharisee! thou art not as other men," he broke off, mockingly, and went to inspect a decoction simmering on the fire in a copper pot.

There was, in fact, a small stove or furnace, with a steady fire, in the room, even on this hot summer day.

The apartment was of some size, not uncomfortable in aspect, but decidedly *bizarre* for the place. The occupant had an appreciation of color, if the flowered chintz coverings, including a canopy to the old "four-poster" bed, and the

rich barred table-spread were of his providing. There were a couple of tall blue vases, a piece of armor, a carved oak-chest, a lay figure, easels, and a pair of Indian clubs, for which his hollowing chest would have been the better had they not been allowed to disappear under an increasing cover of dust.

In one corner were canvases, and charcoal and crayon drawings, in large variety, tacked upon the walls. In another were an air-pump, microscope, electric batteries, crucibles, spirit-lamps, blow-pipes, and the small furnace. In one corner he would decidedly have been pronounced artist; in the other chemist, or even alchemist.

What is his singular occupation? He pulls out an old memorandum-book from a mass of papers among which he is searching, and drops down to inspect it. Let us look on as he reads from one of its pages in a soliloquizing way.

MEM. — LANDSCAPES OF CHANGEABLE COLORS.

To examine why the vegetation of nature changes from pale and tender greens in spring to full deep greens in summer, and red, yellow, purple, and russet in autumn?

Is it the action of the atmosphere on a delicate coloring matter contained in the sap?

Might not this coloring matter, if so, be extracted without destroying its properties?

Might it not be possible to combine with it a very sensitive medium or varnish, and paint landscapes so susceptible to the action of the atmosphere as to change with the seasons, as actual landscapes change?

"Here it is!" he says. "How little I thought when I put down this entry, as a passing fancy, in university days, that I should ever be actually engaged in trying to carry it into effect! What would the university men think of me now? Ah, well! they have all gone their way, and left me astern. Each to his own method for fame and fortune! If I could but cease thinking of the rewards of success. It paralyzes me. Ah, well, this is not work either." And again he resumed his occupations.

And this was the drug-store that Mr. Scott Braxton kept; this the gold-mine, the patent medicine of which he was in search.

It was many years since he had left college. He had established for himself even there the reputation of a person with some curious kinks in his brain. He had since tried business and a learned profession, and failed. He had been left to himself, traveled, and dissipated in his trials a good share of a moderate property that had fallen to him. He was long confident that he should find the right thing at last, but later on was not so confident. He had always had a certain taste for the fine arts, and beautiful

shapes and colors gave him intense pleasure. Something turned his attention especially that way at last, and he asked himself: "Why not be an artist? It will give me license at least to be different from others, and who knows but it is my true vocation."

He went at art thereupon, but was not content with the usual slow and patient steps. The crotchet took him of some highly original stroke. He must regain the distance, rapidly lengthening, between him and the companions of his former life, by some brilliant, new achievement which should lift him far above and beyond the ranks of ordinary men.

Some may recollect, but probably very few, his effort to create a distinctive "American art." This was to be done by idealizing modern industrial science. He endeavored to glorify and give a sort of personality to machinery. He had in his pictures locomotives, trip-hammers, steam-dredgers, and steam-harvesters; he had pale girls among a tangle of spinning-jennies, and grimy mechanics in dusky boiler-shops. These works were not often admitted to the exhibitions. There were touches of good in them, — here and there a pleasing figure or an effect of light, — but they were mainly crude and callow. The public resolutely refused to associate its interest in the subjects, but pro-

nounced them "barbaric yawps" after the inexpressible.

This ambition o'erleaped itself. Its author retired into seclusion, growing more and more morose, but eating his heart out with a fiercer determination than ever.

At length came up again this last idea of his, original indeed. He had revived an early whim, and now persuaded himself that it was actually capable of realization. He had made himself chemist and botanist for its sake, had withdrawn from all other pursuits of his life, left his home, and labored at it indefatigably for months.

Shall I describe here his processes? Shall I enter upon his confused heaps of memoranda, often written upon random scraps, and little intelligible? Shall I open his large volumes of record, showing the composition of colors, the effect of chemicals upon one another, and of various forces upon them? It would not be an easy task. He was himself far from a methodical person. He murmurs even now as he looks round at the bulk of his labored accumulations:

"What disorder here! Perhaps I should have somebody to help me." — "The young Treasury girl is very pleasant," he adds presently, perhaps with no very close connection of thought between the two.

He picks up a volume of the writings of an ancient alchemist, — not that he has faith in those gentry; he would scorn it in these days of exact scientific research. It is a volume of his bric-à-brac, which he bought when not able to contain a certain feeling of likeness between them and himself, in his peculiar pursuit. He falls upon a passage which insists upon the necessity of a preliminary ingredient, of the second rank, and absolutely necessary to be found before the great secret itself, the elixir of life, or philosopher's stone, as the case may be, could be discovered. This was called, in mystic parlance, sometimes "*the ferment of Luna for the red*," and sometimes "*the ferment of Luna for the white — having found which you will rejoice.*"

The one preliminary which had sometimes of late seemed to Scott Braxton important before all others was that of some sympathetic mind to freely confide in, one also who would help him to keep his traps in order.

"The money might be measured out, I suppose, to last for two," he mutters again, and then dismisses these unprofitable ideas.

He set to work to brew, ferment, distill, and extract essences, as of old. He was utilizing in his labors plants growing in his windows and a dried collection like a housewife's herbarium.

He brought back every day fresh leaves and barks gathered in his walks. He produced vacuums and electric and magnetic currents, generated, combined, and decomposed vapors. He kept his vigil far into the night; then threw himself exhausted on his bed, and dreamed till morning an interminable chemical dream.

III.

The acquaintance of Scott Braxton had to be made all over again by the boys next day, so completely had he retired once more into his shell.

Still, by degrees, after the step accomplished, his moroseness was dissipated, his character mellowed to a certain extent; he began to join the after-dinner smokers in the hall, and yield himself to society. The toilsome effort in which he was engaged, to tell the truth, was passing the limits of human endurance, and he felt driven almost in spite of himself to the relief of companionship.

The careless rattle of the boys diverted him, drew him out of himself. No greater contrast in type than he and they could be imagined. He even recalled some quaint, humorous stories of his own, which he told in a shy way. His interest in such matters seemed to have to come

back from a very long way off. Finding that Colonel Brand had a fancy for collecting things about the alchemists, he gave him the volume of his own.

"The alchemists," maintained Colonel Brand stoutly, "were in search of wisdom, and not a tangible philosopher's stone."

"Then the other was mere child's play," said Scott Braxton.

The boys asked him to walk with one, then another, and explained to him common things about Washington, where he seemed to have lived in a kind of daze. They took, in their way, a fancy to him, and were somehow sorry for him. Once they even had a rowing expedition together on the Potomac, above the Chain Bridge.

All this threw him much in contact too with Miss Mary Dale, and the boys seconded the association as much as possible. They seemed to make up their minds that it was a benevolent enterprise to bring the two together.

Still it was not known what Braxton did for a living.

"It's patent medicine, as sure as a gun," cried Morris again, one day, when an intenser aromatic odor than usual pervaded the upper regions. This was a day when the eccentric neighbor alongside had let fall and broken a bottle of his most costly chemicals.

They asked Miss Mary Dale.

"How should *I* know?" she replied, coloring. "You should not be so inquisitive. He is not very well. He is interested in scientific things. It would be better for you boys if you had more to occupy yourselves with too."

Did she yet know? Perhaps. It is certain that she had seen the interior of his room. That came out upon information of the landlady, who accompanied her there on a certain occasion.

One day there had been a great clattering in the upper hall. The scuttle was thrown open and a flood of white light let into the obscurities below. Workmen were there who had repairs to make on the roof. Mrs. Stone directed them, and Miss Dale had chanced to accompany her in friendly companionship. All at once the closed door of Braxton's room, jarred by the trampling, swung back, as is sometimes the way of doors in old houses, of its own accord, and disclosed the recluse at his work. Miss Dale was at the moment at its very threshold.

"Will you not come in?" he asked politely, rising and responding to her look of evident interest.

Mrs. Stone, an imperturbable person who saw little and wondered at less, provided only her dues were paid, joined her, and was included in the invitation. The two entered, and

the girl, thus freed from timidity, indulged in some of those sprightly ways, the quick-darting, and discovering traits characteristic of the feminine sex in the bachelor's apartment.

"What an extremely odd room!" she exclaimed. "And how attractive!" in a complimentary tone. "I like all these things."

She was shown by the host some of his sketches, bric-à-brac, and miscellaneous properties.

"What are you doing here?" sprang involuntarily from her lips. That very instant she repented and would have choked the words back, but it was too late.

"Growing plants, for one thing," he answered evasively.

He led the way to the window and showed two small rose-trees in pots.

"This," he said, indicating a creamy white rose, "is nourished exclusively upon milk. And upon this," showing one of a rich dark crimson, "I pour red wine every day."

He was going to detach for her the principal blossoms from each, but she strenuously opposed the gift.

"Why not?" he asked. "I attach no importance to them. It is a mere whim. I wanted to see what they would do. It is not my principal work, I assure you. — Once I tried

an ink-flower also, but that was a very short-lived experiment. The ink killed it."

"What *could* they do?" she asked, sticking to the point. "What were you expecting of them?"

"As to that, I can hardly say. If I had developed some peculiarly rare and choice flower, in my milk-white rose, I should have considered it suitable, say for brides and occasions of the purest and most innocent gayety. You see there is little effect as yet — it is city milk," he added, with a touch of humor. "My wine-rose, on the other hand, would have been suitable for the heated brows of wild bacchantes."

"But plants do not flourish on the same sustenance that is good for men," urged his visitor. "On the contrary, it is carbonic acid, the very poison that we throw off, which furnishes their life, while they, in turn, set free the oxygen so necessary to us."

"Are you a botanist?" asked Braxton with interest.

"To a very slight extent. I would *like* to be. — But now your ink-flower?" she went on.

"Oh, that, if it had succeeded, would have been worn in the button-holes of tired workers with the brain. Perhaps its aroma would have contained the subtle germs of ideas, or given rise to occult inspirations."

The young woman looked at his small array of books, all of a peculiar sort, — De Candolle on the Color of Plants, Böhm, Frémy, Lawson on Chlorophyl, Corti on the Movement of Sap. Some were in the original foreign tongues, for he had become a linguist, too, in the pursuit of his aim.

"But you should have your table here, the book-case on this side, the cabinet here, it seems to me," said Miss Mary Dale. "That would be more convenient."

With two or three of the changes so deftly indicated carried out, there was already a vast improvement and economy of space. The recipient of these services looked gratefully after his visitor when she went, and took an air of deep reflection.

Not long subsequent to this his real scheme was disclosed to her. She had asked him, referring to what has just been described: —

"Have you any *more* singular ideas?"

"A few," he replied. He outlined to her a project for a universal language, and another for a system of musical notation with exquisite forms and colors, so that the pleasures from all three sources were to be united in one.

"I fear you are too much alone; you are morbid," she said, studying him with a glance of peculiar concern.

Then, to defend himself, and as by way of showing that he was not a mere unpractical visionary, and because he was longing for sympathy, as we have seen, he took her fully into his confidence.

Thereafter they had this secret in common between them.

The session of the legislative branch of the Government now came to an end, and the Congressmen and other important people went away, leaving the house quieter. The boys remained, it is true, but their interest in "old man" Braxton had by this time subsided. They voted him a good fellow enough, and began to take him as a matter of course.

Miss Dale and the inventor were observed to be much together, of evenings, in the parlors. They withdrew to remote corners and conversed in low tones, or sometimes read to each other. Once Braxton drew her portrait, a fairly good one. Most sprightly young women were not very considerate to him; he was "not their style." But this one was highly appreciative, seemed to ignore entirely whatever there was of awkwardness and constraint in his ways, and extended the interest of a mind, itself active, and fond of the curious, new, and thoughtful, to his ideas. Mrs. Chisholm pronounced her more dangerous than ever.

It was not that Miss Dale became on the instant a convert to Mr. Scott Braxton's project. On the contrary, they argued it at length.

"Would such pictures be anything more than a mere trick and plaything," she asked, "even if they *did* succeed?"

He showed almost a touch of offense at this. He had idealized his conception. He described to her the delicious pictures he fancied under his system.

"I conceive them," he said, "changing and full of a subtile mystery as bringing in something like the genuine breath of nature upon our walls. Contrast them with the ordinary fixed, immovable scenes that we now have, at which, after a sufficient familiarity with them, we almost cease to look, however much we may have liked them in the beginning. On the other hand, these new ones, likely to differ every time they were approached, would retain the charm of perpetual freshness and novelty."

"They would have to be landscapes, of course? You could not have figures, buildings, and the like?"

"Landscapes, of course."

"You have your young and tender greens in the spring, your dark greens in the summer, and your russets in the autumn. What do you do for the winter? You can hardly make your

leaves fall and a mantle of snow appear upon the ground."

"I have thought of that. They would be arrested by the winter. Perhaps they will have to be put away during the winter, their period having run down, like that of a clock. Or, again, they might stand during that time as ordinary landscapes, in their late autumn aspect. Only on some rare days of a mild temperature they might stir again with the premonition of the new spring."

"And you might paint in enough evergreens, among the other foliage, in the ordinary way, to keep always an agreeable contrast," said his auditor, contributing a point to the scheme.

He thanked her with a grateful glance.

"But in the succeeding spring itself," she continued, "would they not have totally run down, so that they could never renew their rounds again? You could not expect to make them last forever?"

"I should hope to make the medium sensitive enough, so that they would go on a long time. Very few things do last forever."

"But there is a difference in the texture as well as in the colors of foliage at different seasons. Leaves are coarser in summer than in spring," she objected.

"Ah, Miss Doubting Thomas!" answered

the inventor, "I can give only a suggestion of nature, not nature itself; no painting can do that. I shall convince you yet."

He often tapped his forehead sagely at the mention of obstacles, saying: "I shall meet that — I shall meet that."

"It is my passion to be known, to do something out of the common," he told her. "I cannot understand those who are content to go on in the ordinary humdrum way."

By degrees the fair young Treasury clerk was impressed. She was not a profound mind, and she had never known the sanguine class of inventors. By little and little all this scientific talk and array of experiment produced its effect. Money, and the assiduous effort of a man otherwise intelligent and worthy, were being put into the scheme. That could not be for nothing. She gave him a large measure of her faith, and his scheme a dim admiration.

They investigated matters of detail together. Braxton made her see how chlorophyl, the minute green granules in the fibre of plants, is at the basis of all. He dissolved it from leaves, in alcohol or ether, obtaining a residuum partly wax and partly a peculiar substance allied to indigo.

It was found, he said, with dextrine, gum, and sugar in the original cellulose or germ-cell

of the plant, and its color was not always green. It occurred in but small quantity, yet was the active agent in decomposing the carbonic acid, and converting the other gases into organic matter for vegetable life. He hoped much for his purpose from its intense energy.

Under his microscope he showed how the dark green of the upper layer of a leaf is due to the closer crowding together there than below of chlorophyl cells. He exhibited in the leaf the multitude of openings through which it breathes and acts upon the crude sap. It draws up from below instead of drinking in the rain from above, as is the popular superstition.

They followed the course of the sap in the green layer of the bark; the laws of growth; the rigid mathematical adaptation of the system of leaves in each separate plant, set at haphazard though they seem. The occupation, so far, was surely an ennobling one in itself.

A few times Scott Braxton had joined Mary Dale after her official tasks, and had walked home with her down the long wide stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue. At one end the vista was closed by the white-colonnaded pile of the Capitol; at the other by the vast granite Treasury. The street, with all its awnings out, was sultry, almost Oriental, in the hot midsummer afternoons.

He ventured now, finally, into the Treasury itself, where the feminine employees are to be seen strolling with blue and green veils over their heads in the long, dim corridors at lunch time. He met there his friend, made an appointment with her, and returned, much agitated, after office hours. They strolled first through the grounds of the White House, and then to the small Lafayette Park, across the way, where they sat down upon a bench.

Braxton held, as it chanced, a section of young maple wood, showing the successive rings of its development.

"The tree grows from within outward," he began. "After a time the heart ceases to grow, solidifies, and is dead. I have looked up to the sky through the heart of a great tree entirely hollow, from the outer sap-wood of which, nevertheless, sprung leaves and branches. So it may be with a man, if he give his attention too exclusively to external things."

Upon this preamble, he made her an ardent proposal. He had a certain far-off, absent look even in the midst of his devotion. His work was the main thing, after all. It was chiefly an aid in his work that he wanted. He had strongly felt that with a little wife and house of his own, the probability of an early success in his project would be greatly enhanced. He

said to himself, "I will measure out the money for two. It will carry us through; and there is no one I would rather share it with than her."

As to the recipient of this offer of marriage, she had been browbeaten that day by the chief of her bureau. It was often so, and it was but a wearisome, dragging life at best. She liked Braxton, respected his persistent industry, and even his self-absorption at her expense, and they had got on wonderfully well in their friendly companionship. She was greatly surprised at his offer, and she — accepted it.

The young alchemist had secured his principal ingredient. He had secured, he might have assured himself, — from the charming, confused play of colors in her complexion, — "the ferment of Luna," both for the "red" and the "white."

"He is so odd, dear," was her landlady's smiling comment on the news. Mrs. Chisholm thought Miss Dale — for having ensnared this scion of a highly respected family! — now at last utterly abandoned.

There was a regular wedding, quite soon, at a neighboring church. The boys, among the rest, voted to attend the ceremony in a body. They placed themselves in a pew adjoining one full of boarding-school girls — who had

likewise been casually attracted in by the genial bustle.

As the principals were rather long in making their appearance, Bob conducted a dumb-show of being the groom, solemn, nervous, in broadcloth and high collar ; then of being the bride, modest, drooping, yet coquettish, in her long veil and wreath of orange blossoms. Whereat the boarding-school girls were convulsed, and people looked inquiringly. Aleck gave his blessing, as ostensible clergyman, to the rest. Gus announced his intention of going out to play on the organ himself, but saying, again, that the G string was broken, concluded to abandon the project.

But just then the organist struck up Mendelssohn's Grand March, the bridal party entered, and the boys, to do them justice, behaved most commendably throughout all the rest of the proceedings.

IV.

The young couple spent some time in a honeymoon which included visits to some relatives on both sides. Then they returned, and took a vacant cottage in Mount Pleasant, a pretty suburb, inhabited chiefly by politic government clerks who had succeeded in making themselves fixtures under successive Administrations.

When it had been intimated to one of them, for instance, that the Administration was about to change, he said : —

"I should like to see any Administration change quicker than I can ; that 's all."

Nothing could be more charming than the new bride in her quiet, fresh, economic toilets, her native gayety a little subdued by the novelty of the situation. The groom abated somewhat the tremendous energy by which he had been distinguished. The cottage had a pretty garden, in the renovation of which he assisted with his own hands, setting out there, also, many plants which he needed in his own labors. He interested himself in the matter of tastefully furnishing the house, cultivated for his wife's sake some acquaintance with the neighbors, and became in all ways more like ordinary human beings.

This was but a lull. Scott Braxton was gathering strength. His energy broke out with a greater zest than before. He prepared a painting-room of a peculiar sort. He concocted a prodigious number of sap-greens and varnishes. He refined and refined again upon the delicacy of his medium. By October he was ready to begin a picture, which was to herald forth his invention to the world.

The painting-room was prepared in accord-

ance with the peculiar conditions of the case. It was fitted with a very perfect heating apparatus, and made as air-tight as possible. The painting was to be kept while in progress at a uniform, spring-like temperature, and then, when complete, exposed — for the greater beauty and completeness of the display — in the presence of a company of friends and critics, to the influx of a late autumn or winter atmosphere.

Such was the programme for a first experimental canvas; the later ones, of course, would be allowed to develop naturally. He admitted to his wife that his process was not yet perfect at all points, but he would wait no longer. He wished to launch it in its great main features, — like the imperfect phonograph, for instance, — and, while enjoying the consequent fame and fortune, to complete its details at leisure.

The most excellent of heating arrangements has its faults, and there were annoyances, too, from other sources. Strive as he would, the artist was driven to many an unsatisfactory makeshift, and forced to supplement his curious new colors, here and there, with chemicals and pigments of a much less ethereal sort. Pure chromium, for instance, gives a rich, brilliant green, but, under certain conditions, is

spontaneously inflammable, and care is to be taken how it is handled.

As the work progressed he began to withdraw his confidences from his wife. A time came when he would no longer even admit her to his painting-room.

"No," he said, playfully, "I am going to have my surprise for you also."

None but himself knew the drama that was taking place there, the intolerable strain upon every fibre, mental and physical, the desperate appeals for help, the agonizing into which he entered over his strange project. Sometimes he was relaxed to a point of utter feebleness, and essayed, almost like a child, to coax and wheedle Providence to his aim.

"Ah, dear Heaven," he cried, well-nigh beside himself, "pray let it be! You *can*not let me fail."

It was all becoming vague and wild to the young wife, and passing beyond her ken. Once she asked him, nervously, —

"Are you really sure, dear, that we shall succeed?"

"We *must* succeed," he answered. "The money is measured out to last only till then. 'After me, the deluge.'"

He endeavored to turn this off as humor the next moment, but she had her misgivings. She

wept bitterly at the new and tragic aspect of the case. She saw her husband grow pale and haggard in these days. She implored him to pause, to take but the most ordinary precautions for his health. But he repulsed her, and cried fiercely, —

"I would mingle the best drops of my heart's blood with these colors, to make them go."

Finally, however, he had less absorbed manners; then all at once announced: "It is over. It is done."

On the tenth of December the village of Mount Pleasant showed an unwonted bustle. This was the occasion fixed for the launching of Scott Braxton's strange invention. Although it had long been spoken of as about to occur, the precise date was only determined upon the evening before. All indications then went to show that the morrow would be clear and cold, as was desirable.

The day was cold, but in its earlier part cloudy. The hour fixed for the unveiling of the picture was two o'clock. Guests were invited for a luncheon at one. A considerable company had assembled. A number of the neighbors, the official employees, had withdrawn their valuable services from government business for the time being, to be present. Con-

gressman Wheelright and his family, in town for the new session, were there. The boys — or most of them — supplied a gayer element. They took a sort of personal pride in the affair. They had known "old man" Braxton when he was pegging away at his invention in its early stages, and considered themselves in a measure co-discoverers with him. The most important thing, however, was the critics. These were a professor from the art museum, and one from the Smithsonian Institution, and the art critics of the morning papers. Greatest of all, influence had been made to bring the Washington correspondent of a great New York daily. He could flash it through the whole of the Associated Press, and make you famous in an instant from Dan to Beersheba.

When luncheon was over, the guests moved to the studio. All put on or kept on their wraps, for the doors and windows were to be thrown open to the chilly out-of-door atmosphere. The critical force was favorably posted and the signal given.

The requisite openings were made to admit the raw December air, and the covering withdrawn from the phenomenal picture.

A buzz went around the room, now rapidly lowering in temperature. A cry of admiration broke from the lips of the young wife. Her

husband sent her a sharp glance of reproval, as if this were not in the best of taste.

For the first few moments nothing peculiar happened. The sun meantime came out, and Scott Braxton accepted it as a happy omen, and beamed accordingly.

Surely — yes, it was indeed so — the colors of a group of pale-green trees in the lower left-hand corner of the painting began to shimmer and deepen strangely. The reflection of these in a pool of water followed. The movement communicated itself to the general mass of foliage. It had been but now April — it became midsummer.

The audience held its breath in a kind of awe. The heart of Scott Braxton was nigh bursting with suppressed rapture.

Red and yellowish appearances ensued. Autumn hues of varying strengths slid and shifted over the face of the work, the scarlet of maple, the crimson of oak and sumach, the pale and deeper gold of birch and chestnut. But the clouds, too, the parts that should have remained fixed, began to act strangely, gave highly unexpected effects. Soon everything in the picture moved in a universal wavering and flicker. One would have said that it was burning up.

It *was* burning.

The picture was going off *by spontaneous combustion.*

Its maker rushed wildly out-of-doors, with his hands in his hair. His wife, after a first impulse of solicitude toward the poor painting, which was now all aflame and hopelessly doomed to destruction, followed him. She kept up somehow with his strides, hurried as they were, and finally drew his arm through hers, though he at first repulsed her. They walked on a long way in silence. They walked away into the lonesome parts of the village, and out upon the open roads, leaving their stupefied or mocking guests behind them. She induced him to stop at an outlying house while she negotiated for a hat for him, making some plausible excuse to account for his need of it. She began to let fall some soothing monosyllables, and then fuller words of comfort.

"You must go away for a while," she said.

"Of what use?" he returned, moodily. "I have no further ideas, and the money is spent."

"Your picture was *lovely*, even apart from the strange contrivance," she continued. "Did you not hear me cry out in admiration?"

"I heard, but thought you fancied that the change had commenced, and was annoyed that you should be premature."

"I could not help it. It was a fine and beautiful picture, if I have ever seen one in my life. My heart ached to see it destroyed. You do not know how good it was?"

"I scarcely thought of it, I was so intent upon the process."

"You can do others as good and noble, I am sure. Come! that is our future. Let us dismiss these juggleries! I never more than half liked them, though I was afraid to tell you so. You must study simpler, more legitimate things, and I know that they will succeed. And I —I meantime can get back my place in the Treasury."

The erratic limner bent down and kissed her, with a new birth of affection in his heart. And she had never felt so great a tenderness for him or any other human being as now in his failure and despondency.

They walked on as the day waned, and did not return till long after the red twilight had ceased to burn behind the wintry copses.

The affair naturally made a great stir at Mount Pleasant, and not a little elsewhere. The critics of the local papers could not forbear to write humorously of the exceeding "warmth," and the like, of the new coloring; while the correspondent of the great New York daily gave the history at length in his dispatches as that of a freakish inventor with an unusually absurd bee in his bonnet.

Nevertheless, others too, besides the young wife, had noted the unusual excellence of the picture in itself. The intense preoccupation

under which it was made had resulted in a *naïveté* and unconsciousness of resource, a directness and power, and an original charm of effect which could not be denied. Its author seemed a born artist, and had struck, in true landscape, his proper field.

He was threatened with a violent brain fever, but this was waved back by the sympathetic hand of the sweet ex-Treasury girl, who never for a moment relaxed her vigilance over him. He passed through his metamorphosis, and entered upon a new period of existence, devoting himself to the simple forms and hues of nature as ardently as he had once tried to divine her chemic mysteries.

He is to-day younger and gayer, and his pictures sell for prices that place them beyond the reach of all without Crœsus-like bank accounts.

And, as everything comes to him that already hath, it seems probable that a rich bachelor uncle, who has taken a fancy to his wife, will also make him his sole legatee.

"I was well-nigh beside myself with loneliness, disappointment, and brooding over unhealthy problems," says Braxton to this amiable, charming helpmeet. "You brought me back to a simple, natural, human existence. You are the essence of chlorophyl, the result of all my labors. You are my new art, my strange, almost incredible discovery."

ONE OF THE THIRTY PIECES.

I.

GRUYÈRE'S PLACE.

In the spring of the year 1870, gold had fallen so low that it began to be thought that specie payments — suspended entirely during the long dreary decade of the epoch of the war of secession — would be resumed at once. Silver in considerable quantity actually came into circulation. The restaurants, cigar stands, and other establishments for the sale of the lighter articles of merchandise, gave it out in change, by way of making an extra inducement to customers.

On one of these days Henry Barwood, a Washington Treasury clerk, and McNab, the rather well-known picture restorer, met by accident at the door of Gruyère's restaurant. Gruyère's place, although in the business quarter, is not supported to any great extent by the hurrying throng of bankers', brokers', mer-

chants', and lawyers' clerks who overrun the vicinity every day at lunch-time. It is a rather leisurely resort, frequented by well-to-do importers, together with musicians, and artists, people who have traveled, and whose affairs admit of considerable deliberation and repose. Barwood in former times had been in the habit of going there occasionally to air his amateur French, burn a teaspoonful of brandy in his coffee, and take a cheap foretaste of Paris.

Returned just now to New York to spend a vacation at his home, after a considerable absence, he was renewing this with other old associations.

McNab was sprung from the race which has given the world a large share of its versatility of talent and taste for adventure, and was familiarly known at Gruyère's as "Mac." He was of middle age, rheumatic, and in receipt of an income barely sufficient, with ingenuities of management, to provide for his diversified needs.

He found leisure to come hither every day to retail the gossip of the studios, and fortify himself for his desultory labors with the artful stimulants adapted to that end. He liked the society of young men for several reasons. For one thing, they were more free with their purses than his older cronies. The association, he also thought, threw a sort of glamour

of youth about his own person. Finally, they listened to the disquisitions and artistic rhapsodies in which he was fond of indulging, with an attention by no means accorded them by his equals.

Barwood was of a speculative turn of mind, with a strong leaning towards whatever was curious and out of the common. These proclivities in him, the conversation and pursuits of McNab, together with his possession of a rambling studio or store-room full of trumpery, were calculated to gratify. A moderate sort of friendship upon this basis had sprung up between the two men.

They made mutual protestations of pleasure at this casual meeting. Barwood considered it an occasion worthy of a bottle of Dry Verzenay, a suggestion which was not in the least displeasing to McNab.

The payment of specie was so entirely a novelty that — after the inquiries and explanations natural to so long a separation were concluded — it was among the earliest of the topics they touched upon.

"Sure, it 's the first hard money I 've seen these ten years, so it is," said McNab.

"That is my case also," said Barwood. "I took as little interest in the matter at the time as a boy of fourteen might be supposed to; but

I remember very well how rapidly specie disappeared at the beginning of the war."

"And where has it been?" asked McNab, speculatively. "There 's many fine points of interest about it, do you see? Consider the receptacles in which it has been hoarded — the secret places in chimneys, under floors and under ground, the vaults, old stockings, cabinets, and caskets that have teemed and glittered with it. Then the characters, again, of all its various owners: the timid doubters about the government, the speculators, the curiosity hunters, the misers" —

"Yes," said Barwood, coinciding, "the history of a single one of these pieces would no doubt make a story full of interest."

It did not detract from the value of McNab's conversation, in his view, that the worthy picture restorer pronounced "foine," "hoorded," and the like, instead of in the more conventional way.

"But what I 'm after telling you is n't the singular part of it at all," resumed McNab, taking in a casual way some silver from his pocket and settling down to the subject. "What is ten years to it? According to the mint reports a coin of the precious metals loses by wear and tear but one twenty-four hundredth of its bulk a year. These pieces I hold

in me hand, coined forty years ago, are as yet scarcely defaced."

"And in another forty they may not be noticeably more so," said Barwood.

"Thrue for you," responded McNab, and he continued: —

"What, for instance, has been the career of this Mexican dollar? Perhaps it was made from bullion fresh from a Mexican mine. In that case there would be little to say. But just as likely as not, on the other hand, it was struck from old Spanish plate, or former coins, melted down. In that case it takes us back to the earliest times, and its origin is lost in obscurity. The same identical metal has been time after time re-melted, re-cast, re-stamped, and thus maintained in a sort of perpetual youth. This gold piece upon me watch-chain, for example, was perchance coined from the sands of the Pactolus, and once bore Chaldæan characters."

"How incongruous with such romance would seem its modern uses," commented his auditor, reflectively.

"Right you are," the other went on, gathering yet more headway.

> 'Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
> Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.'

And so the pieces counted out for the ransom of

Richard the Lion-hearted, an Inca of Peru, the material of the spurs of Agincourt, the rings of Cleopatra and Zenobia, the golden targets of Solomon, the ingots of the ships of Tarshish, the treasures of Ophir and of Ormus and of Ind, in our day purchase soap and candles and mutton-chops for Brown, Jones, and Robinson. And yet, why not? We ourselves have come down to very commonplace uses; why not the works of our hands? You with your conventional hat and English walking-coat, I with me spectacles and me Irish brogue, have had ancestors who wore coats of mail in the first crusades, twanged the bow with merry Robin Hood under his greenwood tree, sailed in the galleys of Hengist and Horsa, and traded from Tyre and Sidon."

"You think, then," said Barwood, "that some part of the coinage of antiquity may be yet in circulation?"

"To be sure it is, don't I tell you? I say the precious metals are indestructible. All the coins that have figured prominently in history are, in some shape or other, still extant. Don't I show you that twenty-four hundred years would be needed to wear out a coin completely? But how long will it last, I ask you, in only moderate use, and lying buried for intervals of hundreds of years in the ground? We have

among us the rings, brooches, chains, bracelets, the drinking-vessels, and vases that embody the pomp and luxury of the ages, and glitter in all the chronicles from the earliest days."

Taking a brief pause to moisten his lips, he resumed : —

"My silver dollar here, which I ring upon Gruyère's table, and with which, but for the persuadin' way you have wid you, I should have paid for me frugal repast, has haply once been moulded in Cellini's dagger-hilts or crucifixes, or has formed part of a pirate's booty taken out of a galleon scuttled on the Spanish Main. For aught I know, again, it was current money in Nineveh, or Babylon, or Tadmor of the Wilderness. Perhaps it was one of the pieces paid by Abraham to the children of Heth for the double cave that looked towards Mamre."

"Or one of the pieces of silver paid to Judas for his betrayal of the Master," said Barwood, suddenly.

McNab looked startled, and half involuntarily pushed the money away from him, exclaiming, —

"That 's the divil's own notion ye have there."

"May be it is; but it is a natural enough sequence from what preceded."

Both men remained silent for some moments

upon this, and contemplated, abstractedly, the small bubbles following one another up the long, delicate stems of their wine-glasses.

"Do you suppose," finally asked Barwood, in a meditative way, as if himself impressed by the idea he had so fortuitously struck out, "that those thirty pieces, if really extant, would carry with them an enduring curse?"

"There 's no good in them, you may depend," rejoined the other.

By this time the bottle and the plates of both were empty.

The train of thought they had been pursuing seemed to have found its climax in the turn given it by Barwood. Over their coffee and dessert they turned to more cheerful topics.

"Come around to my place before you leave town," urged McNab, on parting. "Ye 'll enjoy some new rubbish I have there to show ye."

As he hobbled away he muttered to himself again, —

"It 's the divil's own notion, so it is."

II.

THE BUREAU OF ETHEREAL CLAIMS.

THE Bureau of Ethereal Claims at Washington was run by a force of clerks of moderate size, under control of that veteran soldier and office-holder, General Hedge. The general had been a little of everything, in the matter of occupation, in his time. At the outbreak of the war he had abandoned the agency of a large life insurance company, set himself to canvassing for troops instead, and was made a lieutenant over them. He had displayed not a little courage, but more yet of an artful strategic talent, had come out a brevet-brigadier, and had ever since been making a good thing of it in the official service of the government.

The office bristled also with other military titles. Everybody in it, except Barwood and one Judge Montane, seemed to be either colonel, major, or captain. As to the judge, a hard-worked, uncommunicative man, who was said to have a large family to support out of his moderate pay, he himself confessed, one day, over a dozen of beer ordered in during a temporary absence of the chief, that his civic title was not strictly valid.

"What were you judge of, Montane?" the

lively young Mars Brown — who, by the way, had no title either — asked him.

"I 'll tell you, boys," he replied, leaving his desk for the first time on record, and by degrees yielding to the genial influences of the occasion, "I 'm just no judge at all, do you see, except may be as I 'd be a good judge of whiskey, or the like."

Mars Brown was the son of the senator of that name, a man whose influence few generals or bureaus of claims could afford to disregard. When brought to the office by his father, he was given a place there, and presently became its most privileged character. He chatted familiarly with the general, absented himself for several days at a time with calm unconcern, came late in the morning, and went early, as he explained, to make up for it. He was a handsome fellow, thoroughly companionable, and on the best of terms with himself. He displayed a prodigious acquaintance with horses, dogs, guns, boats, and fishing tackle, and was turned to as authority on all matters of that sort. His stock of stories was large, his wit always ready, and his posturings comical. He could convulse a social company, when all other resources failed, by no more than making ridiculous faces.

Among women, great and small, he was a

conquering hero, and the times were rare when he was not in demand for some social observance.

Such was Mars Brown, at the age of, say, twenty-five. He was a confrère of Henry Barwood in the government office, but between two persons of such highly dissimilar character there could be no great intimacy. It so happened, nevertheless, that shortly after his return to Washington from the vacation described, Barwood began to regard him with distrust and dislike, as a possible rival in a quarter where his affections were very clearly centred.

It might have been expected, from a great preoccupation with lobbyists and politicians to which the general gave himself, that the business of the bureau should sometimes languish, and so in fact it did. The heat and burden of it were borne by a few clerks, whose tenure of office depended rather upon their own efficient work than influential backing. The government duties must be performed by somebody, and it so happens, in spite of the great principle of rotation in office, that the heads of many men of undeniable usefulness rest firmly upon their shoulders, while hundreds of others topple all about them.

The Bureau of Ethereal Claims was not without its spasmodic attempts at discipline. The

general spent an occasional forenoon there, lying in wait for delinquents, whose shortcomings, when found, he made the text for a very forcible line of remarks. The business of the office, he would state, should be attended to, or he would make a future theological arrangement for himself of a very unpleasant sort, if he did n't know the reason why. With Mars Brown, however, he hardly went much farther than to request now and then, as a personal favor, that that young man should try to be on hand henceforth a little earlier and rather oftener. To this young Brown was always ready to assent with the greatest cordiality.

A new punctuality of attendance in office hours followed, for a few days, these eccentric efforts at reform, whereupon things resumed their usual course.

In the list of employees, Henry Barwood was neither one of the best nor the worst. Whatever might have been the effect of the life, as described, upon the others or the general public, it was certainly harmful to his own private interests and character. Naturally of an impractical and somewhat morbid disposition, he needed the stimulus of pursuits — perhaps best a business career — in which the necessity for action and the value of the results of action, when accomplished, should be constantly ap-

parent. Had he been engaged in ventures, taking risks and devising plans, either upon his own or any approved responsibility, he might have abandoned fancies, to which he was too much given, and become a person of much use and value in the world. As it was, he found the amplest opportunity for their indulgence.

Every day, from the hours of nine to three, he was set to assort, copy, or make abstracts of letters, applications, reports, the objects of which were remote, the expediency doubtful, and the ultimate fate highly problematical. Without interest in the work, or particular pressure for its performance, he moped over it, and often awoke from his reveries to find his tables of figures a muddle, even his written phrases incoherent.

The morbid are possibly as unintelligible to themselves as to others. The world, viewed by each through the medium of his own distorted temperament, is seen in strangely tinted lights, which are more than suspected to be delusive, yet cannot be dissipated. Barwood's vision was surely affected by such a disturbing influence. He extracted subtle, unreal meanings from ordinary things or circumstances, the manner of a nod, the tone of a remark, and having found them, would brood over them for hours. He questioned alike his own motives

and those of all the world with a painful scrutiny.

What a dim and mysterious problem is not the mind of every human being to every other! With what is it filled, at the time when it makes slight outward sign, and is left to its own devices? There survives — in notes in Barwood's own handwriting — testimony to the effect that there marched through his brain a procession of vivid, rapidly changing fancies and impressions for the most part inclining to melancholy. There were certain aspirations for fame, or prominence, distrust of his own powers, forecasting of probabilities, repining for past sins and follies, epigrams for meetings with the brilliant, rage and epithets for imaginary meetings with enemies. Through the rest came breaths of reminiscence of days of perfect peace, in a high-porticoed house, of a grass-grown road, and a sandy beach in a village of the Connecticut coast, his childhood's home. He had idealized it far beyond any reality that it had ever had. His fancies were rich and full, often to the verge of the chaotic. His will was strong and imperiously set upon its instant designs, but, from the point of view of any large general plan, somewhat weak and vacillating.

It could not be said that he was not ambi-

tious. He would have desired success, not for its splendors or the opportunity of vaunting himself above others, but to secure the kindly recognition of the world, and obviate some of its jarring harshness and discomforts. But no one prevailing impulse had ever yet enlisted his full powers. He saved money, with a general idea of investing it and becoming a capitalist. He gave much time to studies of various sorts. He had learned music among the rest, late in life, and composed music of his own, using as his inspiration some favorite poem, or picture, or character. These compositions were marked by a quality, if the comparison may be made between things so dissimilar, like that of some quaint Chinese vase, or broken bronze figurine of antiquity.

His family, the Barwoods, strangely enough, had been from the earliest times a race of shrewd and driving New England store-keepers, the very antipodes, it would seem, of all sentiment and dilettanteism. How had such a scion sprung from such a stock? Whence came such incongruities in nature?

The Holbrook farm was the one locality, and Nina Holbrook the one figure, in a generally sombre prospect surrounding Barwood, which gleamed in sunshine. They also, by the interposition of even so light and sportive a per-

son as Mars Brown, were to be presently overshadowed.

III.

THE SEARCH.

It was natural enough, with Barwood's habit of retrospect and casting about for the rare and curious, that the subject so oddly struck out in his talk with the picture-restorer at Gruyère's should have taken a certain hold upon his imagination. But to explain a mischievous rapidity with which the notion grew, and an all-absorbing influence it presently came to exert upon him, would be far more difficult. The effect of the mind upon the body is but too commonly remarked. By persistent direction of thought to the part, one may either create or cure a pain in any specific spot of his organism. So, too, may the mind affect itself. By intense concentration upon any single subject, it may arrive at suspending, and finally destroying, its capacity for interest in any or all others.

The idea that the hard coin which figured as the price of the treason of Judas may be still extant and current, in such every-day, commonplace times as ours, seems at first sight utterly incongruous, incredible, perhaps, even a little

sacrilegious. Yet the fact is evidently possible.

"The precious metals are practically indestructible," soliloquized Barwood, going again over the ground. "They do not perish, like baser metals, by oxidation, and the most violent excesses of the elements have no effect upon them. Where, then, are the treasures of the ages, if not still with us?"

"Are they buried underground, or in the ocean?" he asks, going on with his musings.

"From the nature of the case no great proportion can have been thus disposed of. This form of wealth has been too highly esteemed, too jealously guarded, and searched for, for that. In all the wars and convulsions of society, though it has changed hands, it has not been destroyed. Alexander and Tamerlane and Timour the Tartar and Mahomet may overrun the world, burning and laying waste, melting its more ephemeral forms of riches, like a frostwork before the hot blast of conquest, but money is as useful to the victor as to the vanquished. Rome received the heritage of Alexander, the barbarians that of Rome, and modern civilization that of the barbarians."

"The billows of time," said Barwood, dreaming at his desk in the Bureau of Claims, "roll above and engulf all the monuments of men,

all that money may buy, sell, and as it were create; but these cunning tokens of gold and silver glitter and toss irrepressibly in the very topmost foam-crests of the flood. The chief instrument and witnesses of the pomp and luxury, wars, treasons, and varied mercenary crimes of history, are still in our world and of it."

"Why not, then, with all the rest," he runs on, "those evil pieces of money cast down by Judas before the chief priests, when going out, in his agony of remorse, to destroy himself for having betrayed the Saviour of mankind?"

Such were the reflections that occurred to Barwood with a strange and vivid persistency, and, favored by his humoring of them, finally possessed him with a resistless fascination. All coins began to acquire a new and entertaining interest in his eyes. He saw in each a possible exponent of countless centuries of human life and passion. It is true that in such a country as our own a large part of the coinage must be rather new from its native bed in the mine. Yet his occasional encounters with foreign pieces, especially those of Mexico and Canada, so current here, and consideration of the immense sums received as dues at the great ports of customs, in his regard, leavened the entire mass with a touch of romance.

"Is there anywhere to be found," he asked himself, "any account of the career of the thirty pieces subsequent to their appearance in the Scriptures?"

The Capitol library, one of the most extensive collections of books in the world, offers an ample facility for research, and there Barwood began to be found some part of every day, for a period of many months.

He consulted, in his singular investigation, commentaries of every sort upon the Gospels; lives of the Apostles; collections of apocryphal gospels and scriptural traditions; the works of the early fathers; chronicles of the Middle Ages; treatises on Oriental life and customs; histories of symbolism and Christian art; and works on numismatics, — with, finally, accounts of all the more memorable crimes and casualties.

For so possessed was he, that he, after a time, framed an entirely new theory of history.

He looked to find that all the great treasons, briberies, betrayals of trust, murders for mercenary advantage, with perhaps also great financial crises, had been set on foot by this fatal money, now become an instrument of the divine wrath.

"They have mown a swath through history like a discharge of grape-shot," said he.

He believed that, if the truth were known, some of these coins would be found in the bank accounts of the dastardly Byzantine Emperor Manuel Comnenus, and of Egmont, Benedict Arnold, the Hungarian Gorgey, and many others of their sort.

His progress was not rapid. Much of the literature among which he delved was musty with age, written in mediæval Latin, or in obsolete characters, and gave up its secrets with reluctance. A collection of apocryphal gospels "printed for Richard Royston, at the Angel in Amen Corner, MDCLXX," furnished him some particulars about Judas which by no means appear in the Scriptures. Judas was, when young, for instance, it said, a playmate of the boy Jesus, and was even then delivered by him from a devil by which he was already possessed. The chief value of this book was in its reference to another and fuller Gospel of Judas Iscariot, not extant, with the exception of some passages quoted from it in the writings of some such early father as Irenæus. These passages proved, however, to be upon the very subject of his quest, and it was in the early fathers of the first half of the second century that Barwood finally came upon a definite mention of his coins.

The story of the treason followed in the main that of the authorized version of Scripture.

But after the relinquishment of the coins by Judas, because he had betrayed innocent blood, and their employment in the purchase of the potter's field, occurred a supplementary account translated out of its old Latin by Barwood as follows: —

"Now these shekels were of the coinage of Simon, the high-priest; which Antiochus authorized him to issue. They bore the signs of the pot of manna and the flowering rod of Aaron, the high-priest. But he to whom they were given for the potter's field knew that they were the price of blood, and he was afraid. And *he stamped them with a mark like unto a cross*, that they might be known. Nevertheless, great tribulation came upon this man, and tribulation came likewise upon all them that bought and sold with the money of Judas."

Later on, Leontinus, a Byzantine writer of the sixth century, in a treatise on the efficacy of certain forms in imparting a virtue to inanimate matter, instanced, as well known, the malevolence inherent in the thirty silver pieces of Judas. They were swift to carry ruin with them wherever they went. Thence the legend was traced onward. In the Middle Ages, so delighting in all that was romantic, mysterious, and portentous, it appeared to have been implicitly received. Such authorities as Eginhard,

abbot of Seligenstadt, under Charlemagne, — if we cite correctly, — William of Malmesbury, the English chronicler of the twelfth century, and Roger Bacon of the thirteenth, Malespini, the Italian of the same date, and others of equal note, mentioned, as fully established, that the coins of Judas were in circulation, and inflicted serious injury upon those into whose possession they came. It was said to be impossible to amalgamate the material of which they were made with any other silver. Either it would not melt at all, or in melting remained obstinately distinct. This was, however, a mooted point. Some alchemists, on the other hand, seemed disposed to attribute the ill success of their efforts at transmutation to the presence of some baleful taint from this source in the silver upon which they were conducting their experiments.

Matthew Paris, who first popularized the legend of the Wandering Jew, and might have been supposed to treat of this also, on the other hand, strangely enough, makes no mention of it.

The conclusions arrived at by Barwood were these: —

1. There was for hundreds of years a well-defined belief in the continued existence and active circulation of the thirty pieces of Judas.

2. They were supposed to be utilized as an agency of the divine judgment, to be a potent factor of evil, and leave ruin in their track.

3. The tradition gradually disappeared, and is not traced in the literature of modern times.

Here was a useful occupation indeed for a young American Treasury clerk. It would have been interesting to have General Hedge's opinion upon it, for instance. But that functionary was too busy with confidential transactions with his brother-in-law, Richard Roe, a claim agent practicing before the bureau, and with schemes of addition, division, and silence with Congressman Doublegame, to attend to matters even more worthy of his attention than this.

Barwood did not stop here. Now that his belief was put in tangible shape, he felt impelled onward towards some verification of it. He examined minutely every coin collection in Washington, and, as he could, made journeys also to see those in several of the greater cities. Very seldom did he anywhere find a specimen of Jewish money, since Jewish coins are rare.

"The Jews, as he noted in one of his memorandum books, had no coinage of their own until the time of Maccabeus. Simon Maccabeus, by virtue of a decree of Antiochus (1 Macc. xv. 6) issued a shekel and also a half-shekel. These, with the exception of some brass coins of the

Herods, Archelaus, and Agrippa, and a doubtful piece attributed to Bar Cochba, the leader in the last rising against the Romans, are the only coins of Judea extant."

He now began to be affected by a nervous dread brought on, no doubt, by his too close study and preoccupation with this subject. As he alone had felt this strange interest and prosecuted the strange inquiry, might it not be that he was being drawn in some mysterious way within the influence of the fatal money? Perhaps he himself was to be involved in its relentless course. He imagined at times that he felt a peculiar influence at the touch of certain pieces, and shuddered at the thought that it might then be near. He held this to be a clairvoyant sense, that they had perhaps figured in crimes at least. Contact with hands hot with baleful passion had no doubt imparted to them subtle properties, capable of being detected by a sensitive organization like his own.

In such unusual study and speculation Barwood passed the spring and summer of 1870. Towards the middle of August occurred the well-remembered flurry in Wall Street consequent upon the breaking out of the Franco-Prussian war. Gold jumped up to one hundred and twenty-three. Money commanded exorbitant rates, and the whole financial system was

disturbed. It was no more a question now of specie payments. Even the small scattering of silver was withdrawn again from circulation, and did not reappear for many a long day.

The effect of these events upon Barwood, although not immediate, was highly important. With the disappearance of the specie, the daily sight and handling of which had given his morbid conception a tangible support, its strength began to decline. It was not forgotten, but time drew it away from him little by little, and threw hues of distance and strangeness over it. At length he looked back upon it with a half wonderment himself, and a new interest yet more powerful arose to take its place.

IV.

THE HOLBROOK FARM.

The day had been sultry. Even after sunset the atmosphere in the city was oppressive, and pavements and railings were warm to the touch from the steady blaze to which they had been subjected. At the Holbrook farm, however, occasional puffs of air stirred the silver poplars skirting the road, and the brown timothy grass growing knee-deep well up towards the veranda, and gave a more refreshing temperature.

Two idle negro urchins, Porto Rico and Carter's boy, turning somersaults in the grass, suddenly relinquished the fascinating sport to rush and clamor for the privilege of holding Barwood's horse. Porto Rico's longer legs and greater force gave him the advantage. He climbed into the vacated saddle almost before Barwood was well out of it, and trotted off to the stable, Carter's boy whooping and bobbing his woolly head in pursuit.

"Never you mind," cried Carter's boy, "I'll have the other gen'l'm'n's."

"No other gen'l'm'n ain't comin'," said Porto Rico. "I done tole you, child, dey don't bofe come de same day."

The Holbrook house, three miles from the Capitol, of the white dome of which it commands a glimpse across an expanse of green foliage, was a residence surviving from the days of the slave-holders. Like other such places it had been altered and improved upon. It seemed to have been originally a one-and-a-half-story stone dwelling, to which a later proprietor had added a high-peaked roof, dormer windows, and ample piazzas. It stood half-way up a pleasant slope, crowned by a thick grove. A brook ran down the left hand of the entrance road, and beyond this rose a steep little bluff covered with scrub-oaks and chestnuts.

The attraction that drew people to Holbrook farm was not so much the proprietor himself, nor an elderly maiden sister, his housekeeper, nor yet Carter, his farmer and general manager who came with the rest from Richmond. It was the engaging manners and amiable beauty of Nina Holbrook, the daughter of the house. The old gentleman was a partial paralytic, whimsical, and not especially sociable. He was known to have lived in princely style at Richmond. He was said to have met with continual reverses, in the loss of property, sickness, and the death of friends, and the farm had been bought with the last remnants of a great fortune.

Barwood strode to the piazza, riding-whip in hand. A young lady rose from her reading.

Blonde beauty is oftentimes slightly indefinite; its edges are, as it were, too much softened off into the background. But the figure before Barwood was blonde, and yet fresh, distinct, clear-cut, — pre-Raphaelitish, to take a word from painting. In all the details, from the black ribbon binding her feathery hair to the pretty buttoned boot, there was about her the ineffable aroma of a pure, delicate taste.

To a man of Barwood's temperament the matter of falling in love was not too facile. He analyzed the tender passion, put it under a lens, asked it too many questions, and chilled and repelled it.

Nevertheless, after two years of an intimate association, he had discerned in Nina Holbrook a frankness and loveliness of character commensurate with her personal graces, and had arrived at no less a condition than falling in love. First, he believed that her permanent influence upon his character could cure his moodiness and unpractical tendencies, and enable him to exert his fullest powers. Second, by making the supposition that anything was to limit or break off their intercourse, he found it had become indispensable to him.

Their acquaintance had begun in some of the ordinary ways in which such young people meet. It might have been at a tea-party, a Secretary's reception, or an excursion by boat on the Potomac. They discovered that they had mutual acquaintances. His evening rides began to be directed through the pretty lanes that led to Holbrook. She loaned him a book; he brought her confectionery; they played piano duets together.

On her side the feeling, from the beginning, was very different. She admired Barwood for fine traits, and was grateful to him for many kindnesses. But certain peculiar moods of his made her uncomfortable. His interest, also, was too much occupied with books, speculations about the anomalies and problems of life, and

similar serious matters. She found it sometimes wearisome and difficult to follow him. She respected such things, of course, but she had not as much head for them as he gave her credit for. Her taste was of a more practical, commonplace, and cheerful order. She was well enough satisfied with people and things in their ordinary aspects.

She got on much better with Mars Brown, for instance. With him she exchanged gossip on the affairs of her friends and his, discussed the last party or the next wedding, and laughed gayly at his drolleries. She confessed her own stupidity and frivolity with a charming frankness, making no secret at all of it.

Barwood was conscious that he did not always interest her, though she had never shown him anything but the most ladylike attention. He went away lamenting bitterly a destiny that had fashioned his nature in so small and unconformable a groove. His happiness did not consist in being with her, for then he was too often oppressed by his uncomfortable consciousness. It was rather in retrospect, in the delicious memory, when he had left her, of her sweetly roseate face, the tones of her voice, the shine of her hair. He gave her such small gifts as he might within the bounds of propriety. It would have consisted with his no-

tion of the fitness of things to have given her everything and left himself a beggar.

Barwood rode to Holbrook to-day with a definite purpose. Mars Brown, the "other gen'lman" of Carter's boy, was devoting more attention in this direction of late than the exigencies of his boat and ball clubs, his shooting and fishing, and the claims of the social world in town would seem to warrant. Barwood did not really fear him as a rival; it was only the suggestion of a possibility. There might at any time, too, be other rivals. He had determined to forestall the danger, and tell her to-day of his affection.

Yet Mars Brown was a dangerous rival, though perhaps himself as little aware of it as Barwood. He also had been impressed, upon some casual meeting, by the animated beauty of Nina Holbrook. Accustomed to success, he had aimed at first to add one more to his list of flirtations and conquests. The result had by no means answered to his expectations. When he approached sentiment Nina laughed at him. By degrees he had been piqued into seriousness, and for the first time in his life approximated, in his regard for her, a real esteem and attachment.

Although Nina had laughed at first, she came, later on, to sometimes blush at his voice or step,

or the touch of his hand; and had his customary shrewd vision not been disturbed by some unusual influences at work within himself, he might have seen earlier these indications of favor.

He had the audacity that charms women, a frank, open face, a hearty laugh, an entirely healthy, cheery nature, an air of strength, too, under all his frivolity; and there was little more that she could have desired.

Barwood drew closer one of the comfortable chairs at hand, and sat down by Nina. They began to talk at first of the unusual heat, the news of the day, and what each had been doing since their last meeting.

The prospect before their eyes was very secluded and peaceful. Barwood felt a soothing influence from it pervade his troubled spirit.

"I am improving my mind, you see," said Nina, lightly, holding up to him her book, one of Motley's histories. "Even you can hardly find fault with this."

"Am I in the habit of finding fault?" he returned, gently.

"Oh no, I don't mean that, but you know so much that you frighten one."

"Thank you."

He spoke with a grave smile, but was bleeding inwardly.

"Why were you not at the Hoyts'?" asked Nina, changing the subject. "I wish you had been, if only to see Betty Goodwin. You used to know her. It is but so short a time since she was a little girl, and now she is out of school and as old as anybody. You should have seen the attention she received, and her perfect self-possession. It makes one feel extremely antiquated. Am I really getting very much wrinkled?"

She posed herself before him in a sort of quizzical way for inspection. Barwood gazed with such an admiration at her face as almost to forget to speak. She was to him the very personification of youthful bloom and beauty. Any notion of age and wrinkles in her regard was simply inconceivable.

"Methuselah was n't a circumstance," he answered.

She dismissed this subject in its turn with a little pout.

"I am so glad you have come early," she resumed, "I wish the others would imitate your example."

"What others?"

"Mr. Hudson, the Hoyt boys, Mr. Brown, Fanny Travers, Alice Robinson, and the rest. You did not suppose you were to do them alone, I hope."

"Do what alone? I don't understand."

"The tableaux, — Evangeline. Did you not get my message?"

"No, I have had no message. Am I to be implicated in tableaux?"

"Why, certainly. You are to be Evangeline's father, you know. They are for the benefit of the French wounded. I sent you a note this morning, and this is our meeting to arrange preliminaries."

Barwood saw that if he would not lose the opportunity and postpone his purpose, no time was to be lost. The other visitors might arrive at any moment.

Rarely, perhaps, is the marriage proposal anything less than embarrassing, and Barwood was too self-conscious to be greatly transported out of himself, even when most ardent.

"I have something of the greatest moment to say to you," he commenced. "I hardly know how to begin."

"Only those things are well said which it is difficult to say," she returned, sending him back gayly a French *mot*, without suspicion of what was coming.

She looked before her at the glowing evening sky, and so did Barwood. The crickets and katydids had struck up their chirruping notes and the tree-toads their long monotonous

rhythm, while there came from the woods at intervals the sweet, sad note of the whippoorwill. Fire-flies began to twinkle in the uncertain light.

"We have sometimes laughed together, you and I, at sentiment," he continued, "voted it an invention of the story-books; but there are times — there is a sentiment — which — in short, dear Nina, I have come to ask you to be my wife. I love you very dearly."

"Oh, Mr. Barwood," said Nina, looking hastily towards him, with heightened color and a tone of regret, "you must not say so. I cannot let you go on."

"I must go on," said he. "I have never felt so strongly upon any subject as this. I know I am not worthy of such happiness, yet I cannot bear the thought of losing you. Consider our long friendship. You will be mine? Oh, say so, Nina!"

In a panic of dread lest his petition was already refused, he became almost incoherent.

Nina was a tender-hearted young lady, and by this time in tears. His evident distress, and her appreciation of the great compliment he paid her, would have commanded from her almost any return save the one he asked. But the sacrifice was too great. She had not thought it would ever be necessary to change their relation of friendship.

"I am very sorry to have to say what is painful to you," said she, with a sob only half repressed. "I want you to be always my friend. I shall be very unhappy on account of this, but I cannot — you will find some other — you" —

"Do not speak further," he interrupted, impetuously. "You have not yet said the fatal word. Reserve it. Take time and consider. Let me still hope!"

"No," she began, "I ought not" — but wheels and merry voices were heard close at hand. "Oh! they must not see me like this," she broke off, and hurried away for a brief space to cover her agitation.

In a moment more, the Robinsons' carriage was at the steps. When Nina came down, with a sweet, restored composure, there was a jolly party of ten or twelve in the drawing-room. Mars Brown was already amusing the rest with his absurd posturings.

"I shall be Evangeline," said he, wrapping a lady's shawl about him and sitting on an arm of the sofa in a collapsed attitude. "No, I'll be Basil the blacksmith." He made a pretense of delivering tremendous muscular strokes, on an imaginary anvil, with a tack-hammer that happened in his way.

Everybody had his or her own notions of the

appropriate and picturesque. A vast deal of talking was required in arranging the various scenes.

"Evangeline should manifest a 'celestial brightness.' I don't think you do it quite right," said Alice Robinson to the candidate for that place. "You should smile a little."

"Oh no, not at all; she should have an earnest, far-off look," said another.

"Of course she should," contributed Mars Brown, "something in this way."

And he rumpled his hair and contorted his features into an expression of idiotic vacancy.

"If we only had a real artist to arrange them!" sighed Nina. "What would I not give for my old McNab, who was so good at such things!"

"You know McNab, too?" exclaimed Barwood in surprise. "Could it by any chance be the picture-restorer?"

"He was my drawing-teacher at Richmond for years," she replied.

"What a small world, to be sure!" said Barwood, giving vent once more to a favorite reflection of his. The mention of McNab brought back for a brief moment the remembrance of their last meeting, its subjects of conversation, and the strange pursuit into which it had led him.

The signing of the marriage contract was selected, among others, by the amateurs as a fitting subject for illustration.

"We must have a table," said Miss Travers. "At one side sits the notary, lifting his pen from the document to which he has just affixed his name. At the other her father pushes towards the notary a roll of money in payment."

"Here you are," said one George Hudson, taking his place and assuming the appropriate attitude; "here 's your notary; bring on your old gentleman and his money."

"A roll of copper cents would be just the thing," said Miss Travers. "They look antique enough."

"Will some gentleman deposit with the treasurer a roll of antique copper cents," said Brown, passing a hat. "No gentleman deposits a roll of copper cents. Very well, then the wedding can't go on."

"Do you think I 'll sign marriage contracts for copper?" said Hudson. "No indeed; I 'm not that kind of a notary."

"I will bring down some of papa's coins, then," said Nina. "He is very particular, but I don't believe he will mind just for once."

She returned in a moment with a dozen or more, from a collector's cabinet, most of them silver pieces, and placed them on the table.

Barwood, standing by, took them up and began to examine them listlessly.

"I did not know your father was a numismatist," said he.

"He once had a great taste in that way," said Nina, "but his collection now is broken up; when we left Richmond most of it was sold off, and he retained only a few of the choicest pieces, which he keeps with much care in his room. I don't know much about such things. This is considered among the most peculiar, I believe." She selected one from among the rest, in a friendly, explanatory way. "It was taken out of a wreck on the California coast. It was the last that papa bought before his failure. I think it is Russian — or Arabic — no, let me see" —

She was studying it abstractedly, when Barwood took it from her. Scarcely had he received it into his hand when he uttered a loud, frightened exclamation and fell back into a chair, pale, trembling, almost fainting.

The coin was a Jewish shekel, with the pot of manna and the flowering rod of Aaron, the high priest, and upon one side was stamped or cut the mark of a cross.

He pleaded a sudden illness, and rode homeward in a state of indescribable agitation.

V.

YOUNG FORTINBRAS.

Barwood's strange and almost forgotten conception was thus at length most strikingly revived. He would now have overthrown, if he could, the structure which he had so carefully elaborated. He reviewed, step by step, all the details of his former study, but no argument availed to set it aside in the face of the extraordinary realization it had received. One of the thirty pieces was found, the account of the early father verified.

That the fatal piece should appear in the hands of the people whom of all others he most esteemed, and with whom his own fortunes were the most intimately bound up, was almost beyond belief. This, then, was the clew to the catalogue of Holbrook's misfortunes also. What could that old man have been, to be so signally marked out for vengeance? But the question of vital interest now was whether anything could be done to save the family so dear to him from the ruin to be dreaded as certainly impending over them.

With the recovery of some calmness, he felt that his first duty was to remove the coin from

their possession. How was it to be done? He could not disclose to them his acquaintance with its baleful properties. It would be set down as the vagary of a disordered brain, and would not be entertained for an instant. His object must be accomplished, if at all, by stealth.

Nearly a week had elapsed, after the evening when so great and distracting emotions had crowded into his life, before he next rode to the farm. He could not in a lesser period reduce his feelings to even moderate control. He aroused himself to an unusual degree of cheerfulness, with the double object of removing any disagreeable impression attendant upon the manner of his departure, and as a means of forwarding his purpose. The subject uppermost in the thoughts of both was at first carefully avoided.

"Those coins you had the other evening, Miss Nina, rather interested me," said Barwood, carelessly. "Would you mind letting me see them again?"

"I should be glad to do so," she returned, "but my father has locked them up for the present, and gone away on a journey which will keep him a fortnight, taking the key of his cabinet with him. I know he will show them to you himself with pleasure when he comes back."

Disappointed in this, there seemed to be no other immediate resource, and Barwood reverted to the subject of his love. If she would but consent to be his, he might disclose the danger, and they could plan together to avert it. He told her that he had been awaiting her decision, with sleepless anxiety, and appealed to her once more with all the ardor at his command. As he finished he took one of her soft white hands into his.

She did not withdraw it, but yet went on to tell him with great calmness and dignity that the consummation he desired could never be. She hoped that their friendship might always continue, but as for any closer relationship, she could not enter into it. It would be unjust to him without the genuine affection which the situation demanded, and which she felt that she had not to give.

Her suitor went away very much broken down. He said that his life had become a burden to him; he had no longer a use for it. The next day he came again and acted most strangely. He mingled appeals for her hand with wild talk about her father's coins, in such a way as to almost frighten her.

The few succeeding days made a striking change in the appearance of Barwood. He became pale, haggard, and wasted, and seemed

to have lost his capacity for work or any fixed attention. He sat at his desk staring helplessly at his papers, for hours at a time. The General by chance observed it, and being with all his faults a rather good-hearted person, thought he was sick, and told him to go home and take care of himself. Barwood did so, and there delivered himself wholly to his tormenting reflections. He was indeed drawn within the influence of the fatal coin. It was towards him that its full malignity was directed. He believed his doom was approaching, — as indeed it was. He gazed at his altered face in a mirror, and, pitying himself almost as if he were another, pitying the fate to which he had come, — he, who had once expected so much, — cried aloud, with tears streaming down his cheeks:

"Poor Henry Barwood! poor Henry Barwood!"

Sympathy need rarely be enlisted on the side of the unsuccessful lover. It goes out naturally enough to one who seems defrauded of a happiness that should have been his. But what is the right of the case, dear friends? Because Chloe's face is fair, her ways winsome, her form of a distracting, youthful symmetry, and her hair has a golden shine, does that establish a tangible claim upon her in favor of all who

recognize these very evident facts? No! sympathy is very well, but the blame cannot be cast upon Chloe every time that Daphnis chooses to go off in dudgeon to the South Sea Islands, or perchance to the insurrection in Cuba, or make a good-for-nothing sot of himself. It is one of those ill-adjustments of which there are not a few in life, the endurance of which is no doubt of service in some direction not yet fully understood.

Upon the heels of all the rest now came a message from Holbrook farm to this effect: —

"My father has just returned, but we are off again immediately. It is more than possible that we shall take up our permanent residence at Richmond again. We start on Monday. Shall we not see you before we go? If not, believe me always,

"Faithfully your friend,

"NINA HOLBROOK."

The distracted young man mounted his horse at once. He did not know exactly what he was going to do or say. His ideas were in a hopeless whirl of confusion, and there was a numbness over all his sensations. He gave himself up to a blind destiny.

He found Nina sitting under the shade of a large old apple-tree, half way down the lawn,

near a little plateau serving as a croquet ground. He tied his horse to the fence without, much to the disappointment of the two rollicking negro urchins, and walked up. Nina was holding in her lap a tray of coins, and was brightening the contents with a piece of chamois leather. She assumed, on his appearance, a sprightliness not quite natural to her, and evidently designed to obviate the awkwardness of their peculiar relations.

"We have had an accident," she hurriedly said. "One of the chimneys fell last night, and shook down the plastering in papa's room. The glass in his cabinet of coins was broken, and the rain came in so that, this morning, it was in but a sorry condition. I am repairing damages."

"Ah, I see," her visitor commented, gloomily.

"If I were superstitious," she went on, in the same hasty, nervous way, "I should fear of late that something were going to happen. I have spilled salt, crossed funerals, and made one of a party of thirteen at dinner."

Ah, if she but knew, indeed, the tragic portent so near to her! Barwood was in no mood for flippancy. He assumed a dozen different positions in a brief space of time. He sat first in a camp-chair beside her, then hurriedly

paced up and down, then prostrated himself, as if carelessly, upon the grass. The old, useless argument on his part was gone through with again. Nina told him plainly at last that it annoyed her, and that he was very inconsiderate to continue a subject so displeasing to her.

He got up upon this, and resumed his walking. It could be seen that he twisted and clutched his hands, clasped together behind him. As he came by her, at the fifth or sixth turn, it happened that she had the ominous Jewish shekel in her hand. He took it from her with a certain calmness, and looked at it in a curious way.

"Yes, it is indeed fatal money," he cried suddenly, in a harsh, strident voice, "and I am its latest victim!"

He hurled the coin from him with great force. It rose high in the air, skimmed towards the woods, and fell into the brook, raising a little twinkle on the water where it struck.

It was a very slight incident. No magic hand, such a hand as held up the enchanted sword Excalibar, arose from the waves to receive the coin. The beauty of the August day, the peace of the simple, home-like American landscape, were not marred.

A storm of the night before had swollen the

brook, and it ran, tumbling and yellow, on the way to its junction with the Potomac, making little of this trifling addition to its burdens.

Nina Holbrook made him no reproaches. She knew that her father would consider the loss irreparable, yet she found no words in which to characterize this extraordinary rudeness and spoliation.

After a turn or two more of his walk Barwood again paused close beside her.

"For the last time, I ask you," said he; "I have urged everything and can say no more."

Nina did not reply.

"Is it all of no use?"

Still she did not reply. Her eyes were lowered upon her work.

"Is that your answer?" he persisted.

"Yes, that is my answer," she said, impatiently, gazing up at him. "I am engaged to Mars Brown."

He went forward a little distance, and stood, in a tottering way. The girl saw him draw forth a little revolver, one he carried sometimes when riding late in the evening, and hold it to his temple. He seemed to deliberate one terrible moment — while she sat spell-bound as if by a nightmare. Then he fired.

She tried to reach his lifeless body, but fell fainting on the way.

Mars Brown, riding also to Holbrook as it happened, was at the time within sound, and almost sight, of the shot.

Upon the closing scenes of Hamlet, where the characters, after their period of stormy conflict and exquisite anguish, lie strewn in violent deaths, arrives, at the head of his marching army, the young Norway Conqueror Fortinbras. Tall, sturdy, in his chain-mail, the impersonation of rugged life and success, he enters, and leans upon his sword above the pitiable spectacle.

So, too, the brilliant Mars Brown, elegant in figure, well-dressed, joyous, lightly cynical in his thoughts, came half whistling up the path, cutting off the clover-tops with his stick. He was in a most excellent humor. The sights and sounds of rural life — of which he was not, in general, too fond — the pleasing prospect, the aromas, the dancing butterflies, appealed to him to-day with an attraction they had rarely exercised before.

"Egad! this is n't so bad, you know," he said within himself.

The next moment he reached the large, old apple-tree, and stood beside the two inanimate bodies.

Thus we have traced here, in detail, the suc-

cessive steps of a somewhat remarkable history. The Washington dispatch of a New York paper summarized it much more briefly, the morning after the calamity, as follows : —

" Henry Barwood, a young clerk employed in the Bureau of Ethereal Claims of the Treasury Department, came to his death yesterday, by the discharge of a pistol in his own hands. The shooting was at first said to have been accidental, but later developments show that he had been ill and depressed for some time, and that he was given to eccentricities, which make the theory of insanity, taking the form of suicidal mania, much more probable."

McINTYRE'S FALSE FACE.

I.

McIntyre was a rough-and-ready young fisherman of the Maine coast, — rough, but after all meaning no great harm, — who introduced to his home on Little Box Island the first sample it had ever seen of a "false face."

The object thus termed was one of the ordinary grotesque masks of the carnival time, such as it is in American cities. It had a prodigious, rubicund nose, goggling eyes, and a very highly-colored complexion in general. The false face enjoyed for a short time after its arrival a most distinguished success. Boisterous guffaws issued from the single store on the wharf that evening, and an unusual attendance was drawn to the always popular resort.

"Them things had n't ought to be allowed," said one member of the company to the rest, recovering but slowly from the fright that had been put upon him with it as he first entered the door.

"What in time be they for?" inquired a younger member, with an ingenuous scientific interest.

In reply a traveled associate explained to him some of the goings-on he had once seen with them at a German Easter ball in Boston.

Next, McIntyre, desirous to extend the field of his triumphs, slipped out with his false face to slyly call at the abode of the Skeltons. This Skelton boarded the quarry hands, when there were any, — for it was a quarry of much less importance than that on Great Box Island, and now and then shut down. His daughter Lill was called the greatest feminine case "to carry on" in the settlement. What with Lill and the quarry hands, the fun at Skelton's was certain to be fast and furious, and some of the audience at the store followed discreetly behind in order to witness it.

McIntyre knocked at the door of a large kitchen, used also as a sitting-room, and entered. He was surprised to find but a single person present, and that the one of all his circle of acquaintance whom he knew the least. It was the quiet, delicate-looking, young new wife of Amos Cooley. She sat in a chair expectantly, a shawl drawn over her head, and a tin pail in her hand, having come over on an errand for milk. Amos had married his wife

from an island of the archipelago still smaller than Little Box, and inhabited by but one other family besides her own.

She started up on the entry of McIntyre in his hideous false face, gasped, as at sight of something incredible, put her hand to her side, screamed horribly, and fell to the floor in violent convulsions, — all before the jester had a chance to snatch off the absurd imposition and reassure her.

She was out of her mind for a month, and within two years she died, never having recovered from the shock.

Amos Cooley, her husband, who later took to drink and did not long survive her, in the first fury of his rage, rushed in search of McIntyre and struck at him with an axe.

"I did n't go to do it, Amos!" cried the luckless masquerader deprecatingly, but without the least avail.

Only the interposition of friends, who hurried him at once into a boat and off to the mainland, saved him from instant destruction. Later, Amos even took his gun and hunted him there, and was so unrelenting in his hate that McIntyre finally went "out South," as it was said, where he was supposed to have permanently settled.

This is the whole of his personal connection

with these adventures, but the grimace of his trumpery mask went on, by a strange fate, smiling a fixed and baleful influence down into the lives of later generations.

II.

Amos Cooley's wife left behind her two infant sons. The first was born not long after her fright, the second a year later. These children were called respectively Albon and Alrick, in deference to a taste for the ornate and novel prevailing in the locality — where were also found, for instance, a Uno and Una, a Cöello and Cöella, a Martecia, a Violena, and a Leonorena.

Albon, the elder, proved to be a hopeless imbecile. Nothing, on the other hand, was adduced against Alrick but a sullenness of temper, which grew upon him, and might have been justified perhaps by many mortifications he endured on his brother's account, and his general situation. Albon, the idiot, became a standing resource for the amusement of the island in every idle hour. He grew up large, spare, and loose-jointed, and ran about in a shambling way, with his head down. He had little or no forehead, but his appetite was tremendous.

Sometimes he would turn upon a persecutor and cry, "You dog, you!" likening him pathetically to that which he himself, perhaps, most resembled.

The two were grudgingly maintained by an uncle, on their father's side, till the elder was towards his twelfth year. It was said that this uncle made Albon sleep in the cellar and beat Alrick cruelly for slight cause. He made legal affidavit, finally, that he was unable any longer to continue this benevolent support, and threw them upon the cold charity of the public.

A peculiar problem was now mooted. Little Box Island, under the laws of the sovereign state of which it formed a part, was organized (as a community having insufficient inhabitants to be a township) under the primitive form of government of a plantation. There was no copy of the revised statutes on the island, and no case of pauperism had before arisen; but it was the opinion of the most eminent jurists assembled in Maxon's store that a plantation makes its own roads and schools its own children, but if it has any paupers to be taken care of it sends them to the nearest town.

The constable of the island, therefore, conveyed Albon and Alrick to the nearest town, which was Great Box Island, about the same distance out to sea as itself, and twelve miles

to the eastward, — and there happily got rid of them.

But in less than a week, when the government of Little Box Island was in session, the constable of Great Box Island strode into their midst, carrying Albon and Alrick by the collars of their jackets, one in each hand, and set them down on the floor with a thump.

"Here they be, and don't you forget it," he said. "You can't send 'em over our way no more. We 've got enough of our own to tend to. Ef I 'd a ben down to the poor-farm to Baker's Neck, the day they come, they would n't a ben left there, you bet. Where paupers is born and brung up is where it belongs fur 'em to be took care of. We don't bundle none of ourn over to you, and expect you to shell out for their grub."

The magnates of Little Box, in consternation, reiterated their theory of the legal aspects of the case. The constable of Great Box was severely caustic.

"That don't hardly jibe," he said; "that won't wash. Go to law about it, if you want to! Go on! take it up to the Supreme Court at Wash'nton or to the High Jint Commishin at Genevy, for what we care. Mebbe it 'll cost ye as much 'fore you 're through with it 's though ye 'd tended to the young uns at home."

The Little Box magistrates appeared impressed by this consideration, and were upon the point of making some new provision for the infants, when one half of their embarrassment was suddenly removed. A farmer of Great Box Island, one Bowker, happening to be present, declared that he wanted a boy, and would take Alrick away with him.

"I have got a house full of girls," he explained, "and there ought to be some boy round somewheres.

"You could go along o' me and tend sheep, and do chores, and go to school some between times, — could n't ye, think?" he said, addressing the protegé.

Alrick directed at him a furtive look out of his bright, small eyes, in which there was a touch of obliquity at moments of agitation, and gave in reply a nod of his mop-like head, but did not speak.

A small sum was, upon this, voted for Albon, who, for his part, went back to the guardianship of his relative, and, sustained somehow by his wonderful appetite, slept regularly in his cellar as before for many a long year thereafter.

Alrick crossed over by sea with his new patron, and came to a large old farm-house, weather-beaten but comfortable, which combined with

numerous out-buildings to make up a pleasing mass. He slept here, in the attic, on a cot, spread with the horse-blankets and a patch-work calico quilt. About him were bags of meal and seed corn, festoons of dried apples, an old horse-hair trunk, the best harness and whip, used only on state occasions, and the farmer's boots and oil-skin suit for rainy weather. For the first time in his life he was well-fed, warm, and contented. He did not mind the scampering mice. He liked the bar of sunlight that came into the dusky place, and traced the squares of the window on the floor.

On summer mornings he was awakened by the scratching of the branches of a tree against the panes, and the cackle of the barn-yard fowls. In the spring he smelled the fragrance of lilacs and cherry blossoms, pure and sweet with dew. Processions of white schooners paraded along the blue belt of sea plainly in sight before him. He followed the cows to pasture, stopping with them as they munched lazily a mouthful of toothsome grass here and there on the way. He turned the crank of the churn, brought in fire-wood, gee-hawed the oxen, followed the mowers with his rake, topped turnips, lent the farmer a hand at putting up a new length of fence or mending a stone wall. Between times he got such schooling — for

which in truth he showed no great inclination — as was possible under the circumstances.

He was often perverse and sullen in the beginning. The farmer's wife had to keep a stick for him in the fire-place "to break his temper with," as she said.

"We don't want no boys round here that won't mind," she told him. "Our boys allus had to mind" (her boys were all dead or married off now), "and you will."

It was predicted by the neighbors that he would run away as a former boy had done, — one "Fred," who had gone from Bowker's, taking stolen property with him, and joined a circus. Why should not this one follow suit?

But Alrick did not run away. On the contrary he came, through humane treatment, to seem an entirely tractable and reliable person. He was a playmate of the children and a member of the family on equal terms. He played with the daughters of the house, with Marietta, Caroline, and Idella, the youngest, whom he came particularly to like. Up to fifteen he was of a slender build, swift and agile of movement, but in the hobbledehoy period he grew stocky and took a rustic heaviness which remained with him, though he was at no time a bad-looking fellow.

III.

The quarry on Great Box Island, once prosperous, had "failed up," as the islanders said, owing its employees, store-keepers, and others. It came, through a legal claim, into the hands of a large building firm of New York. Pending the settlement of some complication about the title, the firm sent a young man, a nephew of its senior partner, to keep a general eye out, and see that none of the movable property was disturbed.

The young man, Francis Fosdick by name, found, on his arrival, a straggling hamlet of poor wooden houses, catching such a foothold as it could on a hillside of granite bowlders. There were no noticeable trees. Its midsummer aspect was almost as dreary as that of midwinter elsewhere. His quarry was on the hill to the right. Rust-colored water stood deep in its pits. The blocks taken from them, some for sills and doorsteps, others to roar as Belgian pavement under the traffic of a great city, lay forlornly about. Here was a broken derrick; there a great pair of rusted wheels; again a forge, with scraps of iron and mildewed leather; by it a tool-house, and again a powder-house, with padlocked doors and a portentous air of mystery.

"Kinder dull, like, around," said a denizen of the place, picking his way past, as the newcomer sat meditating near his charge.

Fosdick admitted that it was dull, and listened to the denizen's account of what it used to be, — how there had been more than fifty fellers at work; how they used to be down to the wharf every night, holding calico parties and other festivities, in the hall.

The denizen passed on, and he continued his meditations. The gist of them was that such a banishment seemed rather hard lines for a person of his age, twenty-four, a club man, who had attained to a dog-cart, and confidently aspired to a four-in-hand. Ah, if the issue of his great speculation in the stock of C. Q. & K. had been different! But then he recalled to himself that he *had* made the C. Q. & K. venture. He had been lured into it by the wiles of one in whose employ he was to have learned the business of banking and brokerage, and had lost all his own patrimony, together with a good part of the substance of a confiding aunt whom he in his turn had innocently inveigled. It had been decidedly harder lines recently when he was without any occupation, brow-beaten on all sides, and humbly doubting whether he should ever make a figure in the world at all. The facing of the disagreeable, he had been

informed, was one of the first conditions of success. The prospect here was surely disagreeable enough to abound with hope, even though it might not endure more than a couple of months. He set himself, therefore, to face his new situation resolutely. He read some of the books he had brought with him, cultivated the acquaintance of the fishermen and storekeepers, and sometimes took a dory and went out to the stretch of water called the Reach, to fish. There was one of the storekeepers who was in the habit of scrawling rude diagrams of yachts and the like on sheets of brown wrapping paper, and ornamenting his walls with them.

Fosdick complimented him as (in a style of phraseology at the date) an excellent "drawist."

"Sho!" returned the drawist, with affected modesty. "I draw 'em off jess 's they come. I never learned no rules."

The young daughter of the house where he took up his quarters, dressed up, in the evening, after her day's work, and played upon the melodeon; but Fosdick found in her a commonplaceness of view, a lack of imagination and liveliness, which made her but a slight resource for his entertainment.

He took to exploring the island, and thought

the outlook in its interior far pleasanter than that at the landing. He recalled the fag-ends of some stray botany and geology, and tried to develop bucolic tastes.

On a certain first day of August he came, in the neighborhood of the south shore, where the view of the ocean was broad and the bluffs high and crested at intervals with dense small groves of spruce, fir, and cedars, to a large wooden farmhouse with numerous out-buildings as gray as the granite bowlders in the surrounding sheep pastures.

"It 's the kind of thing you read about," said Fosdick to himself, quite impressed at the sight.

Desirous to view it nearer at hand, he went to an open door from which feminine faces were peering at him, and made the conventional request for a glass of milk. An elderly woman in a faded red and black delaine wrapper, one end of a coil of rusty hair falling down her neck, was engaged within, together with a pale young girl, in domestic duties.

"'Pears to be a close day for travelin'," said the old woman. "Walk into the settin'-room and set down. Marietta 'll fetch you the milk there."

The kitchen with an immense fire-place, and a great wheel for spinning wool set out for use in the sitting-room, were sufficiently in keeping with the interesting exterior.

"But is n't there in the whole country," mused the visitor, impatiently, as he sipped his milk in the presence of the pale Marietta, "a person of the feminine sex worth looking at a second time?"

In the very instant of this criticism a door opened, admitting another young girl, who entered saunteringly, and sat down in a small wooden rocking-chair, assuming an indifferent air, as though the fact of a stranger's being there had nothing whatever to do with her coming. Fosdick felt his question at once and charmingly answered. The sterile region did not produce much that was attractive, he decided, but when it did, it made a complete job of it. There was in her a certain half Puritan, half worldly daintiness or elegance of effect, which gave a decided piquancy. She wore the simplest of gingham frocks, a neat ruffle ending its skirt. A row of smoked pearl buttons which fastened it down the back, in young girlish fashion, were not fully buttoned. Here was a type justifying all that eulogists have said of rustic comeliness. Her lightish hair was cut square across her forehead. Her nose turned in just the slightest degree upward. The blue of her eyes was of an opaque kind, and very distinctly visible across the room, so that it connected itself with the blue of the sea

and the mountains of the mainland, showing through the open doors. She folded her arms across the breast of a very slender figure, and rocked in her chair. The motion showed a pair of neat small ankles, in slippers retained in place by elastics over the instep.

Marietta addressed this person, who was her sister, as Idella.

The young man, thus impressed by Miss Idella, was of much better looks and manners than the visitors that usually came to them, and she on her side was wondering, through her assumed indifference, who he might be. He was certainly not a peddler, neither did he sell lightning-rods, cabinet-organs, sewing-machines, nor reapers. Nor with any more reason could he be taken for one of those plausible sailor-men who try to sell at exorbitant prices common silks and velvets, purporting to have been smuggled.

Fosdick made as much conversation as possible in order not to have to go away too soon. He complimented the milk, and told them the old story of the city lady who resented, in the country, being served with milk with the cream on it, on the score that it was a greasy yellow scum. It was not old there, and was well received. The housewife also came in to listen.

"Which way was you from?" she inquired,

beginning to manifest an interest. He was not loath to establish himself in their respect, and so told them of his coming from New York and his purpose in the island. The pretty one of the two sisters, who had been offish at first, also gave him more of her attention on learning this. It took an aggressive manner, but this was only a form of coquetry.

"I don't like New Yorkers," she said to him, pertly. "You never can trust them."

"Perhaps it is due, in the cases you have noticed, to association at some time with Great Box Islanders," he returned.

"That 's going a long ways for a reason."

Sudden, wild, laughing shrieks without interrupted at this point the exchange of repartee.

A third young girl, followed by a stout young farm-hand, burst into the kitchen in a tumult; but seeing the stranger they retreated through opposite doors almost as precipitately as they came.

"Ca'line Bowker, what *is* the matter?" called her mother.

There was a sound of hasty ablutions in a tin basin without. Then the pursued girl returned, breathless still, and with a furtive demure look at the visitor at the same time, from a pair of nice dark eyes, explained, —

"Alrick jumped out and chased me, just as I was goin' to blow the horn for supper, and he rubbed blackberries in my face."

"He *is* the *roughest* boy. I guess *I*'d make him stop," said Idella.

The pursuer himself, somewhat later, — having made a toilet by soddening his stiff hair with water and bringing it up in a pair of wisps forward of his ears — came in and leaned a stalwart shoulder against the door-jamb.

"Has the calves been fed, Alrick?" inquired Mrs. Bowker.

"Yes 'm. I give 'm all the feed there was. That there chunky-built one is the fearfulest eater, 'most, I ever see."

"Ca'line, you come and see what there is to make some more mash of for 'em," said Mrs. Bowker.

"*Ca-a*'line," mimicked Idella, with impatient emphasis, under her breath, to the visitor. "I wish she *would* call her Carrie or even Cad — but she won't."

"*You* 're all right, though," ventured Fosdick — whether it was his real opinion or not is not relevant, — "you have a very pretty name."

"Do you think so? Well, I don't like my last one."

"Oh, you 'll get rid of that easily enough."

"No, I guess *not*," she returned, with a deprecating rising inflection.

But she gave him a grateful, approving glance for the compliment.

Alrick, on the other hand, gave a person who perpetrated novel and wishy-washy talk like that a glance of a kind quite the reverse.

When Fosdick had gone away, he was the subject of discussion at the supper-table. Alrick leveled coarse sarcasms at him, representing his ease and polish of manner, so unwonted there, as foppery and a "putting on of frills." But the girls defended him, particularly Idella, who found herself at one time so considerably in advance of the rest in his praise that she came to an abrupt halt.

"Look at Dell blush!" cried Etta.

"Shut *up!*" Idella returned. "I guess I *ain't* blushing."

But she blushed now if not before.

Fosdick carried a pleasing image in his mind that day, pursuing his way back through the woodland and over the long stretch of road lying between it and his forlorn quarries. In the general dreariness, any touch of grace in his surroundings took an extreme value, and perhaps he exaggerated that which he had just found. It was not formal beauty, but only piquant comeliness of a purely Yankee sort.

It coincided with a notion of his of something daintily, ideally French, entertained before he had made the European tour.

The other sisters too, though rustic more after the common order, were not uninteresting. Caroline was almost pretty, and Marietta was of a certain activity of mind, reaching out to a suggestion of something above her station.

He made the pretext of desiring to find a vein of copper, said to exist somewhere in the neighborhood, to stop soon at the farm-house again.

"I want to know if they set store by that yet," said Mrs. Bowker, stopping the movement of her rolling-pin to gossip. "There ain't nothing to it but fools' gold. My son from Californy told 'em so years ago, when he was on."

"Californy!" said Marietta, giving her mother an apologetic hug.

"Well, 't is Californy, hain't it; San Francisco is?" returned the old woman, hopeless of improvement.

Idella donned her large straw hat, and went as far as the gate with Fosdick, to give him the bearings of the copper-mine. When there, he praised the fine old farm-house and the scenery round about. She was highly indifferent as to the view. As to the house, she said incredulously: "Yes, it 'll look a little better when it

gets some paint on it. Father *is* going to paint it in the fall."

"Never let him touch it with a brush. You will spoil it," protested the connoisseur warmly.

Idella took this for more banter, but it was of a kind beyond her, and she kept silence. A man of thirty or so, with a sandy beard, now drove by in a wagon, and she exchanged salutations with him.

"It 's the mail boy," she explained. "He 's always asking me to ride with him when he passes along. He said to me the other day: 'Here you 're gittin' to be a regular old maid, Dell; why don't you ever stir out anywheres?' He 's got two nice horses and a farm, I guess I 'll 'go for' him."

She laughed, and Fosdick thought it a very musical sort of laugh.

"Oh, 'go for' me," he appealed.

"Maybe I will," and she laughed again.

He had said that he would stop on his return and let them know what he found at the mine. Marietta and Caroline were still in calico then, but Idella had put on more careful raiment. This new dress, he saw it so often that he came to know it, was a kind of plaited jacket and skirt, in modest dark brown, with a simple white collar. It seemed eminently adapted to her circumstances, yet at the same time of a

certain stamp of distinction. Hers, he thought, was one of those cases of natural taste and deftness, the more to be valued when found amid unpropitious surroundings.

On his return home he turned the talk upon these new acquaintances with the matter-of-fact Miss Emeline, his landlord's daughter. It appeared that there was some sort of a feud between herself and them. Her accounts of them were not of the most favorable.

She considered them, among other things, "stuck up."

"What about?"

"That 's more than *I* know, unless it is on account of their 'visitin' in Boston. They 've got a sister married there. Dell 's been there most o' the time the past two years. She only comes home for a kind of vacation in the summer."

Fosdick pursed his lips for a whistle. "Oh ho!" he began, "you mean to say, then" — But he continued, "And the brother, is he stuck up too?"

"There ain't no brother. Oh, you mean Alrick Cooley, I guess."

Then she gave a succinct history of the brothers Alrick and Albon, as heretofore related. Alrick, Miss Emeline said, had left the Bowkers when he was twenty-one, and gone into various occupations, — sailing in vessels, work-

ing in the quarries, and so on; but continually turned up there again. She thought he was always dangling after Idella.

"I thought it was the other one he seemed to be fond of."

"No, it is Della. My! if I was as airified as she sets up to be, I would n't have no such poorhouse trash round me."

So then it was sophistication on her part, and not a phenomenal rustic grace that had charmed him. It was the married sister in the city, the latest fashion plates, the emanations from shop-windows and pavements of a metropolis, to the subtle influence of which he had yielded.

That simple gingham frock had been artfully planned; that belted jacket, as likely as not, copied from Beacon Street.

IV.

These disclosures, however, by no means put an end to the young quarry-superintendent's need of distraction. He returned to the farmhouse again and again. For the pleasure of being with Idella he drew the farmer into long narratives, to which when started he did not always pay the closest attention.

"I had a step-mother, and was licked around

from pillar to post, when I was a boy," the sun-browned and baked old farmer, sitting in his shirt-sleeves and waistcoat of faded check, would say. "I run away from her when I was ten, and never see home again till I was twenty-one, and then I 'd been most all over the world and was master of a vessel. I s'pose I 've caught more fish than any other man in the United States. I 've sailed sixty odd trips in a Grand Banker. I was nigh gettin' into the slave-trade once."

"How was that?" inquired Fosdick absently, taking a moment from his whisperings with Idella.

"A man originally from these parts persuaded me. He was one o' the smartest of 'em all. They sailed out o' Salem then, — yes, old God-and-morality Massachusetts, — that 's it, that 's it. An old don in Cuby worth his millions first got him into it. He made loads o' money, but it took most all of it after a while to get pardoned so 's he could come back here and live. Sumner done it for him, when Andy Johnson was president."

The farmer had sailed out of New Bedford in a clipper ship half as long as from where he sat to the school-house at the cross-roads. He had been on Alexander Selkirk's island, on Easter Island, and in New Holland, — where the

aborigines can track a deserter from a ship over the naked rocks by no more than his scent alone.

Fosdick could amplify a detail here and there from his own reading. He may not have added much to his general standing in the house in this way, but he certainly did to the growing jealousy of Alrick, who put in a remark, though of little pertinence, now and then to show that he was not to be wholly crowded out of the talk.

"Well, we ain't had time to do much readin' here," said the mother of the family. "We 've always had to *work*. What we know is mostly what we 've see. I was 'fraid the girls would get in a kind of idlin', readin' way down to Boston, but I dunno 's they have. Dell, you don't read novils and such like when you 're down to Georgiana's — do you?"

"Why, do you s'pose I would?" returned Idella, smiling slyly at Fosdick at the same time.

"Land! I dunno, I dunno; there 's goin's on that 's beyond me in these times."

Alrick had a confidante in the matter of his regard for Idella Bowker. It was a certain Mrs. Wixon, a sort of nurse and general utility woman in the neighborhood. She read stray copies of the weekly story-papers and kept

up an amiable sentimentalism rare in the practical community of which she made a part. She took almost the interest of a school-girl in any matter of the affections. She was accustomed to encourage the young folk of the humbler sort to come to her cottage, and they held many an evening's merry-making there. But Alrick had got in the way of holding sober conferences with her in quiet moments. In return for his confidences she always predicted to him the most hopeful things. He came now in alarm to complain of the aggressive new intimacy of Fosdick.

"I am as good as him, any day," he said, indignantly, concluding his story. She agreed with him in this; assured him, indeed, that he was much better. He was to keep cool, and be certain that everything would come out all right in due time.

"They 're an empty, flighty set, these city fellers," she said. "They don't really amount to a row o' pins. I know 'em well. You 'll see, this one will get tired and go off pretty quick; and besides, Dell 'll be sick of *him* even 'fore that."

In the Bowker family "father" was held in a wholesome respect, and his girls waited, to carry out some of their most cherished plans, till he was well down the road in his wagon, or

off to sea in his boat. With "mother," on the other hand, a certain reliance could be placed in coaxing and wheedling. One of their projects, set for an afternoon when their father should be securely out of the way, was a visit to Baker's Neck. Now, at Baker's Neck, in a rude cabin, lived an old couple, "half-Indian," as it was said, and Mrs. Baker, the woman, told fortunes by means of a tea-cup.

"Ask Em to come, too," they suggested to Fosdick, but his landlord's daughter, with her lack of imagination, declined.

"There ain't no Indian about 'em, as I know of," she said. "They 've always lived that way, cookin' their vittles over a few sticks, and shootin' and fishin' round, because they 'd rather do that than work. They ain't folks I should much care to associate with. The town poor are kept there, to their house, too, when there are any. They get so much a week for takin' care of 'em. They used to have a woman pauper down there with teeth as much 's two inches long. She 's dead, though, by this time. I did hear, the other day, that there was talk of puttin' Albon Cooley there. Everybody on Little Box Island is more than tired of him by this time. Alrick hain't ever wanted him round where *he* was. I don't know how they 'll manage it."

Baker's Neck was best reached by boat, across a narrow inlet, after passing over some wide fields. The expedition was a merry one. Fosdick was considerate enough to keep Alrick in a good humor by leaving Idella to him a part of the way. He spoke, upon rejoining her, of the possibility of their finding the unfortunate Albon at the place.

"Oh, I do hope it is n't so," she replied. "Alrick is so worried by him."

While they were in the boat, a fog or mist of light consistency, almost dry, and held in suspense in the sunshine like a silver powder, drifted up to them, involved them, and as quickly passed over. While enshrouded in it, they splashed and spattered gaily to all points of the compass, pretending to have lost their way. On landing, Alrick scoffed contemptuously at the fortune-telling nonsense, and, taking a pail, strolled off to pick berries, while they should be occupied with it. The rest of the party were stationed by Della on a high bowlder, to wait while she should prepare Mrs. Baker, who was often surly, and then followed in response to a signal waved up to them by her.

There were no paupers visible at the moment, unless it were three tow-headed children, who cowered against a side of the cabin and

drew the open door back upon them to partly cover their rustic confusion. It was soon learned, however, that the idiot Albon was in fact on the island.

The preparation of Mrs. Baker by Della did not seem to have been very effectual. She took little notice at first of the presence of the visitors. She barely inquired of one of the girls, "How 's your mar, deary?" and went on imperturbably with her culinary operations at a fire, which she replenished from time to time from a pile of brushwood occupying a considerable space of the interior. In dark shadow, by a ladder mounting to a poor loft, sat an old man, — old Baker, the husband, with a crutch across his lap. He made some feeble remark about his "rheumatiz," and lapsed into silence.

"To think of a real fortune-teller surviving to this time of day, with a short, black pipe in her mouth, a red handkerchief on her head, and who says 'deary'!" soliloquized Fosdick.

Della was obliged to renew her solicitations to the old crone to predict their destinies.

"I can't, deary, I can't," Mrs. Baker replied, in a harsh, croaking monotone. "It 's all lies I tell ye, any way. 'Sides, I got to git supper. Some other time, gals, some other time."

Against this it was urged that their friend Fosdick might not then be with them. With-

out at all changing from her indifferent manner upon this, and as if it were only some casual part of the domestic duties in which she was engaged, she brought out a cup containing a little water and tea-grounds, and handed it to Fosdick. She told him to turn it around and spill the water out, framing at the same time a wish. The fortune was to be construed from the appearance of the particles of tea thus left stranded in the cup.

"You 'll get your wish" (it was no more important than for a kiss from the pretty Idella). "You 'll have a letter 'fore long. You 're thinkin' of writin' a letter. You 're goin' to have some trouble with a dark man. 'Pears as though you 'd come through all right. Yes, you 'll come through all right. You 're goin' to cross water afore long. You want to look out sharp for that dark man. Here 's a light woman and a dark woman, but I can't exac'ly see now how you stan' towards 'em. You 've see some un sence you come on this island that you think a mighty good deal of."

"Why! did n't we tell you he was a married man?" cried the girls. They had agreed upon this little fiction, in order to test the old woman's occult art to the utmost.

"I don't care; he 's see somebody on this island he loves more 'n he does himself. No,

he *hain't married*," she pronounced boldly, the next moment, catching and interpreting shrewdly one of the amused glances passing between them.

The turn of Idella came next. To her she said, —

"You 'll get your wish, too. You 'll meet a man with a hat-brim about a foot wide. Your husband is going to be worth fifty thousand dollars in gold. He 'll take you away to the city. It 's a big city, too. There 't is, plain 's can be," and she pointed with a bony and leathern forefinger at a considerable quantity of the tea grounds collected in a mass.

To the other girls she prophesied lovers, handsome husbands, money and happiness in unstinted supply. Marietta was to have a lawyer; Caroline a doctor. Each of these was to be worth one hundred thousand in gold.

"Oh, Mrs. Baker," protested Della, "it 's too mean of you to give them more money than me."

"I can't help it, child, can I, if the cup reads that way? — But — 'pears as though, lookin' at yours ag'in, there *was* suthin' else comin' to you to make it up, by will or some such way."

And thus the good-natured sorceress deftly equalized the fates.

The company romped back, in the same gay

spirits, to the shore, where Alrick was awaiting them at the boat. Fosdick and Idella had trimmed each other's large straw hats with flowers and a small short-stemmed cranberry growing in the dry moss on the tops of the bowlders. Idella, in a gay bravado, set the young man's a moment on her own head.

"You know what the forfeit is," he said, as she gave it back. He made a gentlemanly feint of claiming the traditional privilege, which she as easily evaded.

"You shan't kiss my sister," said Caroline, pretending to bristle a little at sight of it.

"I did n't," he said, with a pretended air of injury.

"She would n't let me," he added the next moment, and they all laughed at this defense.

As they two loitered behind, the others got before them into the boat, and pretended to row away and abandon them there. But they sat comfortably down upon the shore to wait.

"Are you anything of a phrenologist?" Idella asked. "Can you tell people's characters that way?"

She bared her pretty head saucily to the breeze, laden with the grateful odors of summer and the sea.

"Let me try," returned Fosdick.

He touched her hair lightly with a finger or two.

"This, now, I should say," imitating the professional manner, "was a person who had a married sister in Boston, a person who visited there a great part of the year" —

"Stuff and nonsense!" she interrupted, twisting suddenly away from him. "You *knew* that. Who told you? How did you find out?"

They began to talk about Boston. She gave him, in a diffident way, an address there, if he should ever come and should care to call upon her.

She almost seemed to have something else on her mind, which she was going to speak out, but she did not.

She hated the island, she went on to tell him, and thought the folks on it horrid. She hated housekeeping, and she hated the country. She proved not to know even so much of the flowers and shrubs about them as he. She could not tell hackmatack from cedar, nor wheat from oats, classing all the cereals alike under the head of "grain," and boasted, instead of regretting, that she could not spin, like her sisters. Perhaps she fancied that she commended herself to the favor of the young man in assuming an interest only in more sophisticated and luxurious things than those to which she had been used.

If so, it was a mistake on her part. Fosdick

was desirous to look at her solely from a bucolic point of view. He wanted to sentimentalize her as a nymph of the woods and pastures. Such a one in his fancy might even become for him (were it perfectly certain and established that he was not cut out by destiny for a career of dog-carts and four-in-hands) the head of a very superior order of modest rural establishment.

"Oh, you *ought* to like housekeeping and the country, you know," he said, reproving her.

He ventured to reprimand her again for walking in the thinnest of coquettish slippers, disclosed by the accident of their getting entangled in a piece of marshy ground. She returned him but defiant answers, however, when he took the tone of patronage.

But for the delay on the shore, as described, the excursion would have passed without an apparent flaw. But the delay proved to have momentous consequences. While the boat was returning for the pair, and was still a few rods distant, the ungainly figure of the idiot Albon Cooley shambled hastily down the hill and came close to them. He peered into their faces, seemed to find a pleasure in the sight of Idella, and tried to lay hold of her. She shrank away from him in intense disgust. Fosdick threw himself between them, and enabled

her to embark, but was himself detained with an elfish pertinacity by the idiot.

"Alrick, *you*'ll have to get him away," appealed Marietta to the young farm-hand, who sat in the boat, an agonized witness of this scene, so humiliating to himself. Had he suspected the presence of Albon on the island, he reflected, untold wealth would not have induced him to come. How could he hold up his head again before the city chap, having been thus shamed.

He leaped from the boat, with a black and savage face. He strode towards his brother, freed Fosdick from his grasp with a wrench, and, when Albon would have fastened upon him in turn, thrust him off with such a brutal violence that he fell heavily among the rocks. A sympathizer with the fool and his protector at other times, he could now have blasted his hateful presence from the face of the earth.

Albon gathered himself up, and with a feeble, uncertain aim, hurled missiles after the retreating boat. During all of the homeward journey, though the others tried in a friendly way to draw him out, hardly a monosyllable escaped from Alrick's parched and contracted lips.

V.

Mrs. Bowker regarded this "gallivanting 'round," as she called it, as a useless waste of time. She was not deterred, one day, when Fosdick came, upon appointment, to join a rowing party, by any considerations of the awkwardness of the thing, from saying so.

The daughters, assembled in the sitting-room with their polished visitor, and desirous to give him only the best impression, exchanged glances and frowns of dismay at the countermand, and then entered upon expostulations, but all without avail.

"Dell, you ain't a-goin' out on the water again!" the shrill voice of Mrs. Bowker exclaimed from the kitchen. "There 's the fog comin' up so thick *now* you can't see High Head. You 'll catch your deaths. Gracious sakes! there 's more work in this house! Who 's goin' to fetch the cows, I 'd like to know? Who 's goin' to do the milkin'? Alrick, he 's away, gone to see 'bout gittin' Moseley's mowin'-machine, — and your pa, he 's away. Nett, you come along and wash up these dishes that 's been stannin' ever sence mornin.' Dell, you 've got to git the cows, — or Ca'line, — one. Land sakes!"

"I 'll get the cows," volunteered Fosdick, and restored the spirits of the embarrassed circle by his charming way of taking it.

"You don't know where to find them. But you can come with Cad and me, if you want to," said Idella.

It was a long stretch that they made, up and down over the rocky pastures. Caroline took the fences alone, disdaining aid. Idella paused in a dainty assumed perplexity on the top, and permitted his assistance to be extended to her.

It was a bond of intimacy between them, in the fancy of Fosdick, that her mother had scolded them together. A woman in a faded delaine wrapper, who said "Californy" and "settin'-room," had scolded him, Fosdick the ex-club man.

They came to a cool spring, running into an old moss-grown tub, where Idella gave him a drink from a birch-bark dipper, hid in a cleft in the rocks. Cad stampeded the cows, which broke through the bushes on a run, whisked their tails and threw out their legs in their sideway, awkward fashion. The party thought they saw a man lurking mysteriously in the edge of the woods. They got caught in a piece of soft ground (this was the time of the slipper episode above mentioned); and these were the whole of their petty adventures.

Three days thereafter, Fosdick came to say good-by. Old Mrs. Baker's prediction, wonderfully enough, was coming true. He *had* received a letter. It recalled him from the island, and he must leave by the City of Camden the next morning. He stayed to tea with the Bowkers. They gave him, among other viands, a certain strip taken from along the back of one of the sun-dried salt-fish of their shore. This they instructed him was "the dream-line," and whoever ate of it was likely to be visited at night by a vision of his future wife or husband, who would offer a glass of water to quench the thirst it occasioned. By a not unnatural association of ideas, he dreamed that night of Idella. He received again from her hand a draught of cool water in the birch-bark dipper of the spring.

It was a lovely, mild summer night, with light milky clouds drifting across a nearly full moon, when he finally took his departure. His new-found friends insisted upon escorting him a part of the way. They went arm in arm at first, all singing, but by degrees he fell to the rear with Idella.

"It was quite unprincipled of you to refuse to pay the forfeit that day, for wearing my hat," he said to her. "Do you not think so?"

"No, I do *not* think so."

"It is a custom of the country, and I should not think you would want to transgress it. It probably came over in the Mayflower, and had its origin in the most ancient times."

"It came over in the City of Camden, I guess," she rejoined smartly.

"You are very hard-hearted," he argued, in a pleading tone.

"It would n't do you any good," she said in reply.

There was certainly a trace of relenting in this.

"Oh yes, it would, dear. I am going away. It is the last time — I should carry away such a sweet remembrance of you."

He bent down, and without more ado passed an arm lightly around her waist. For a brief instant she suffered her head to rest against his strong shoulder and her charming lips to meet his, offering but the faintest show of resistance demanded as a concession to self-respect.

They parted at last and he went on alone.

He halted in the midst of the moonlit wood, where heavy black shadows were blotted in strong relief down upon the road, and pale ghostly vistas vanished on either hand. He asked himself abruptly: —

"What do I mean by it, now that it is all over?"

He made no answer to his own question, but moved on in a deeply pensive mood. He spoke again presently, saying, —

"Well, *she* has amused *her*self, too, I suppose. She does not have a person of my sort to play off all her little points upon every day."

The recollection of these little points in detail and in mass overwhelmed him, and he sighed: —

"Ah, it is lucky I am getting away from here just as I am."

But in the morning whom should he see at the boat, again, but Idella. She had accepted the mail-boy's invitation to-day, and aroused in his breast delusive hopes that his honest merits were going at last to be recognized, only to secure a final leave-taking with a more favored lover. She made the pretext of having brought Fosdick a little package of unimportant trifles that he had left at the farm-house. Alas for the poor mail-boy! Another coquettish costume, too, to-day, a new one of dark blue.

What with the effect of this and his recollections of the evening and night before, Fosdick made her much warmer speeches of farewell than he had intended or than he could approve to his own conscience.

The plank was about to be drawn on board.

"Ninety-seven Mackintosh Street, then,"

said the young man, as repeating reassuringly the address she had given him for Boston.

"Ninety-six," amended the girl. "If you don't find me at home, — you always can at Gay & Talbot's store. I 'tend there."

This is what she had long had on her mind to tell him.

There was no time for more. The ex-quarry-superintendent sailed away. She '*tended* there? he reflected. She came very well indeed by her stylish aspect then, if she were one of the young women behind Gay & Talbot's counters. It was a choice and delicate variety of goods they handled at the emporium named. To move about among them so freely must be almost as good as owning them one's self. Still, he liked far better his idea of her as the girl of the woods and waters and the unpainted old farm-house. Smoking his cigar on the upper deck of the steamer, as she voyaged among the fair blue islands — made, now and again, fairer, bluer, and more mystic by fleeting effects of mirage — he felt extremely remorseful and uncomfortable. He thought more positively than ever how lucky it was to be getting away from there, having gone no further.

No sooner had he gone, than Alrick Cooley, seizing the most unpropitious moment possible to speak his mind, said to Idella: —

"I want you to marry me, Dell. You 've know'd I did all along."

"I have n't known anything of the kind."

"Well, then you know it now."

"I don't want to know anything about it."

"That city feller 's turned your head. He 'll make another Jen Belden of you, ef you take up with him; that 's what he 'll do."

Jenny Belden, it seemed, was a girl of the island who had been betrayed by a city man, under particularly distressing circumstances.

"Alrick Cooley, I *won't listen* to no such *talk!*" and she started off in high dudgeon.

"I did n't mean nothin', Dell," he said, taking a humbler tone, upon which the girl turned back. "I 've got a little pile o' money saved up, quite considerable for these parts, and I kin make more. Your father he 's gittin' old, and wants summun round he kin depend on. You understan' the farmin' business, too. We should callate to take the farm and keep it right along, when the old folks was done with it."

He paused, but Idella did not speak.

"That ain't no kind of livin' for girls, in them city stores," he continued. "I 've heard it from them as knows."

Another pause, still without response from her. She was listening in unmistakable disdain; she would not even condescend to argument.

"I suppose Albon 's got somethin' to do with it," said Alrick, reproachfully, "but I could n't help that, could I? Anybody might have had a brother like that."

"He has n't got nothing to do with it."

"Your father was a poor boy himself. He come up from nothin' at all, I 've often heerd him say so."

"Well, *I* did n't, then. And I don't calculate to go down to it, either, what 's more."

"Look out you don't!" cried Alrick savagely, picking up a scythe he had had in his hands and walking off.

But he put down his scythe at the barn, instead of going to the fields with it, and resigned his place. He took service first in the mackerel fleet just off shore, and later was heard of in the coasters, and then as making the dangerous winter fishing voyages from Gloucester to George's Banks. His confidante, Mrs. Wixon, watched over his poor interests as best she could during his absence. Towards spring she felt moved to address him a letter of gossip from the island, as follows: —

FREND ALRICK, — Dallas Munson's Engaigment is Broke off. Eudora heerd something about him after they was publishd and the Wedding all reddy. He was so set in his Way

he don't clear up nothing, sayin he guess he could stan it if she can. Otis Watson's wife carrid off the Prize at spinning-match down to Judson's Cove last week. Nobody sepposed she was so Spry. Same week the folks was up to our House one nite, high goins on. Wisht you had been Along. Emeline Benson was down to Boston and she stop in to see Idella Bowker at her store, thinkin she would. Whoshd she meet comin out but that city felow, the same one, F. Fosdick. Idella she blusht Up and denied it. Likely he goes a Great eel. So if I was you Id give it up and not waste enny more time on Idella Bowker. There Is plenty more jesst as good and mighty site better. Wether hear ben cold. So no more at Presant from your true Frend,

CATHERIN A. WIXON.

To which, in course of time, Alrick replied:

DEER FREND MISSES WIXON, — Its no Use I kant help Thinkin of Her thow other Gurls may bee just as good as you Say. I pass by her stor. Bein to Boston one day but dont go In not bein stile enough to her taist (So I seppose) I hav ben wreck down Block Island way sense I seen you. We left Swamscot wind bein fresh at the time S. E. bein thick and Foggy. Run

till the skipper judge himself as up with the Island, header her off S. E. with his jib Haul to the Winderd, made Breakers ahed, tried her for stays she would not come roun. went ashore stern forrard, a total Lost. Cargo bein Lime took fire but no lifes lost. If one Was, you no who, some folks woodnt a cared much. So no more at Presant from your tru frend,

ALRICK COOLEY.

VI.

Having escaped his entanglement, before, as it seemed, any serious harm was done, Mr. Fosdick, now under guidance of what he was pleased to call his better judgment, was disposed to guard himself carefully against any renewal of it. This became the easier every day, as new impressions and interests, including new sentimental attachments, obliterated the old, in a memory not too keenly retentive of such things. He advanced to higher grades in the service of his building firm, and began to take a more favorable view of his prospects in life. Idella was as good as forgotten. Once only, happening to be in Boston, with an idle hour on his hands, he half yielded to a new enticement in her direction.

Standing on the steps of his hotel, a walking

advertisement came by and thrust into his hand a bill describing the bargains offered at present at Gay & Talbot's. Gay & Talbot were selling off dress patterns, balbriggan and lisle thread hosiery, and ten thousand dozen embroidered handkerchiefs, for the next twenty days, at an astonishing sacrifice. It recalled Idella Bowker vividly to mind. Why might he not step in and have a word with her across the counter? The store was not far distant. He stepped down the street and entered it. But no sooner was he fairly in the midst of its heavy, patchouli-scented atmosphere and clustering crowds than a strong sense of the folly of what he had been going to do overcame him, and he turned on his heel and departed. It was this visit, and this alone, in which he was seen by Emeline Benson, and which served as the basis of her reports in the island, and the letter of Mrs. Wixon to Alrick Cooley.

In the following summer Fosdick was sent once more for a short time to the quarry on Little Box Island. It was now out of its legal difficulties, and was again being worked. It was early in the summer, and he hoped to depart before Idella should have arrived for her vacation. Her sisters were absent as well as herself.

How strangely uninteresting was the house,

with its remaining inmates now! He went alone to Baker's Neck, and saw Albon there, whittling a stick. He was told by Mrs. Baker another fortune, of a light lady and a dark lady and a letter and a journey, all quite different from the first. He talked with the "drawist," who still papered his store with the brown paper yachts, and he went out to the Reach to fish in his dory as before.

At this time Alrick Cooley had returned by degrees towards the scene of his discomfiture, and was a part of the crew of the coaster Eleanor Jane, plying with miscellaneous freight among several considerable towns on the main, and frequently passed through the channels of Great Box Island.

On a certain day, when the Eleanor Jane came down the Reach before a fresh breeze, Alrick was at the wheel, brooding moodily over the place whose every stock and stone he knew so well, and lost a couple of points in his steering. The variation would bring the vessel unpleasantly close to a dory, containing a man, which lay off Barlow's Point. Alrick would have brought down his helm to remedy the error, but suddenly recognizing the inmate of the boat, with a fierce exclamation, put it up instead.

The man in the boat got up his anchor in a

panic, lost one of his oars, and attempted to paddle out of danger with the other. The brig followed all his weak evasions, and bore down upon him with an unerring aim. The shadow of the great black hull was already over him. The helmsman gloated in anticipation of his longed-for vengeance. The skiff would be cracked like an egg-shell, and pass along under the keel with a slight scratching sound, and that would be all.

By what chance was it that the skipper came on deck at this moment, rubbing his eyes from a nap? He had scarcely time even to rip out a sounding oath. He rushed upon his steersman, hurled him aside, and dragged the wheel with a great wrench to starboard.

The brig fell off with a sudden yaw. The small boat danced frightfully in its wash for an instant, and was safe. The skipper turned then upon his seaman, who hid his attempted crime under an affectation of stupidity, and cursed him, as the saying is, up hill and down dale.

This account of the affair was given by Alrick himself to Mrs. Wixon. Sometimes, he told her, he awoke nights trembling with horror at the thought of what he had so nearly done. Again, he blamed himself bitterly for his failure to rid the world of his hated rival. This was a degree in sentimentalism far beyond

the simple mind of Mrs. Wixon. She was secretly alarmed at the wild and moody temper of her confidant, and much inclined to curtail their friendship thereafter, a desire in which she was soon effectually aided by circumstances.

The Great Box Island quarry had delivered to the main a quantity of building stone, which for some reason was rejected. Fosdick went thither to reclaim it, found another purchaser for it in a city to the eastward, and shipped it on board the Eleanor Jane, which lay in port open to engagement. As the prevailing winds promised a short run, he also thought good to take passage in her himself.

A skipper, three men, and a boy composed the crew of the Eleanor Jane. Fosdick was not a little surprised to find Alrick forming a part of it. He spoke to him pleasantly, but his advances were rebuffed with short and surly answers.

There was not much "heft," the skipper said, to the breeze. Instead of passing Great Box in the night, they were only abreast of it — some ten miles off — towards noon of a following day. Fosdick was discoursing with the captain, and told him of his recent narrow escape from being run down in a dory while fishing.

"Why, was *you* the one?" cried the cap-

tain. "This was the vessel. If I had n't a grabbed the wheel, you would n't a been no live man now. Cooley!" he continued, shouting in a facetious tone to Alrick, who stood at the rail, splicing ropes, "here 's the party you nigh run down in Great Box Reach. He 's a comin' there to pitch you overboard to pay for it."

"I wish I *had* sent him to hell," returned Alrick, scowling darkly.

There was no responsive humor in his mood, and he did not change his position.

"I won't have no such talk out of you," cried the skipper in a rage.

"You 'll have just what talk you kin git."

The captain started towards him, catching up a belaying-pin as he went. Fosdick threw himself between them. The intense bitterness of this humble rival towards him, the dark sense of injury under which he must have labored to make it so abiding, flashed upon him as in a sudden illumination. With it came a sense of the keenest regret for the flippant and purposeless conduct which could have aroused such a feeling, which could have had such momentous consequences in the life of another.

"Let it go this time," he appealed good-humoredly to the captain. "It was an accident, and he is sore on the subject. It 's all right. *I* have no fault to find."

"Oh, *you* don't find no fault! *you* don't! Much obliged! D—n you!" the morose sailor returned, with an infuriated shriek. Seizing a heavy iron bar, which offered a weapon to his hand, he aimed a frenzied blow at Fosdick, and knocked him bloody and senseless to the deck.

He paralyzed with it next the hand of the captain, who had drawn a revolver against him, and possessed himself of this also.

The remainder of the crew would have seized him, but his prowess in the struggle was prodigious. He shot one in the thigh and drove the other two before him in terror to the rigging, where he bound them fast.

The captain escaped to his cabin. Besieged there, he fired through the door a shot from a single-barreled pistol, which still remained to him. It took effect, though this did not at once appear.

Alrick, in a kind of untamable Berserker rage, was complete master of the vessel. He fired a shot into Fosdick to finish him, and spurned the prostrate body of his enemy with his foot. Finally, with an axe he smashed the steering gear, cut the sails and every important hoist-rope, staved in all the boats but one, and, taking that, escaped to land. The men who had been tied worked themselves free of their bonds and came down to release the captain, attend

to the wounded and dying, and work their craft into port as best they could in its cruelly disabled condition.

VII.

The assassin reached the land of Great Box Island, near his old home, towards evening. He set his boat adrift, threw his revolver into the bushes, climbed the cliffs, and passed the night in the woods. A cold, dismal fog drove in upon the shore. All night long, even in his fitful slumbers, he heard the blowing-buoy, in the surf off the Cup and Saucer reef, seeming to call, as was its way, "Oh! Wo! Wo!" The flash-light of the lighthouse on the hill threw its broad rays, projected upon the fog, slowly round and round in a circle, like a great eye inexorably searching for the wretched criminal cowering in the dark woods below.

At break of day, when Mrs. Bowker opened the farm-house door, this same figure presented itself before her, in most pitiable plight. To account for it, he said that he had been driven ashore, and his bruises and tatters were the result of falls among the rocks. He dared say nothing of a shot-wound in his side, inflicted by the captain's pistol, from which the warm blood was constantly trickling down. He wanted only warmth, food, and rest for the day, he

said, till he could get back by some fishing-boat to the main.

Idella had come home. When she came down to breakfast, this day, with her hair, not too carefully done, but comely still, even in disarray, the disabled Alrick was lying on an impromptu couch, formed of three chairs, by the kitchen fire.

"Goin' to shake hands, ain't ye, Dell?" he said, putting out one of his own.

She had meant to do this, and had approached him for the purpose, but an unaccountable repugnance and terror seized her. She diverted her course to the pantry, and carefully kept away from the kitchen for the rest of the day.

The farmer towards evening brought word that a chance offered to go to the mainland, which the guest accepted.

"Like enough you could come back ag'in and give us a lift with the hayin' a spell, could n't ye, Alrick, 'fore ye go off on another trip anywheres?" asked farmer Bowker.

"Like enough," returned the hapless man.

He groaned aloud, overcome by the pain of his wounds, a sudden recollection of the past, and the destiny that awaited him. It was to the grisly, monstrous gallows that he was to go, and not to healthful toil in the hay-fields and

to the companionship of the pretty Idella in the peaceful farm-house.

He had foreseen the end even in the midst of his fury, but had cried to himself, glorying, with a kind of desperate improvidence, in his deed.

"Very well! it is the price I will pay."

The island family saw no more of their quondam protégé till he stood in the prisoner's pen, in the city of nearest jurisdiction. They looked at him there with a startled, fearful fascination. It seemed incredible that a friend, an inmate of their household, almost a son, could have done the hideous crimes laid to his charge. If it were so, they believed there must first have been operated in him some physical change, which had affected every atom of his frame, and made him a totally different being.

The hurts of Fosdick proved serious, but, though he was slow of recovery, not permanently disabling.

Nor was it by him, but rather in the interest of the sailor shot at the same time, whose wound gangrened and proved mortal, that the criminal was pursued in the courts of justice.

He met with Idella during the trial. She was the trimmest and neatest figure in all the court-room. Yet somehow his crack on the head had disillusioned him, and made him

amazingly fastidious. To his new state of mind, her commonness of manners, her least solecism of speech or action was glaringly apparent. Her family and neighbors too, away from their island, were stripped even of the small interest he had attached to them there. Idella said, "I *seen* it" and "I *done* it," and ate, at the hotel table, with her knife,— daintily, it is true, but still indisputably with her knife. Fosdick could not make himself to feel in need of further repentance now. He thought it peculiarly hard, in fact, and out of all proportion to his offense, that so tremendous a retribution had come down upon him, a year after he had resolutely broken off the flirtation, without the slightest intention of ever renewing it.

At the same time he felt easier in his mind after a little explanation they had together, when his ex-sweetheart told him: "I should never have married Alrick Cooley, even if I had never seen you."

He was easier still when he learned within a year that she had married the faithful mail-boy, and later, that this mail-boy had been appointed lighthouse keeper, and made her a most excellent husband.

Alrick, in a second trial, which an ingenious counsel procured for him, was adjudged insane, and committed to an asylum instead of a prison.

From this, in time, he was released as cured, and went to begin the world anew in parts unknown.

It proved that the idiot Albon, the deformed brother, who had been once his care, and then his shame, became in the dark hour of his trial the most efficient of all his protectors. Produced in court, he made a profound impression. When all the circumstances of the birth and early life of the two brothers were recited, it was the opinion of a jury of twelve good men and true — locked up no more than forty-eight hours before arriving at this decision — that the eccentricity of Alrick, like that of Albon, was to be ascribed entirely to McIntyre's false face.

MISS CALDERON'S GERMAN.

I.

THE first advent of Mr. Alexander Dwight Braisted Hicks to the actual cognizance of Miss Louisa Calderon was on the occasion of the delivery of his great Yale Commencement oration on "The Causes of Decay in Nations."

Could nations have been aware in time of the contents of this admirable document, there is no telling what notable events might have been otherwise, what calamitous consequences averted. As it was, his own name, together with that of his treatise, were simply misspelled in the newspapers; the oration aroused no great public furor, and came, in time, to be thrust into a very dark closet and regarded with disdain even by its author.

But at present he skipped easily around the world and the ages, from ancient Assyria and Athens, to Salt Lake, and the Argentine Republic. The trading Phœnicians, the Amphictyonic League, Carthage, Venice, the Low

Countries, Macchiavelli, Montaigne, and Macaulay's New Zealander sitting on the ruins of London Bridge all came in for a fair share of representation. "What do we everywhere find? Is not the lesson ever the same? And again — and sixthly — But may we not, despite this long record of disaster and decay, despite the momentous portents that seem to lower on the horizon of the future, still look for the dawning of a brighter day? Oh yes, my classmates, fellow-countrymen, fellow-patriots, bid me not yet, in the language of despair, to doubt of the glorious destiny that still awaits humanity!"

The attention of Miss Calderon was not unwaveringly riveted upon this discourse, though it was the particular wish of her brother (James Borden Calderon, of the catalogue) that it should be so. Her brother, where he sat, with the body of his class in the centre aisle, sent her from time to time solicitous glances which said as plainly as words, —

"Aha! did I tell you so, or did n't I?"

She telegraphed back in return some faint sympathetic smiles which might have meant an entire coincidence of critical opinion or only a sweet sisterly interest in himself.

The orator of the day, it appeared, was one of those prodigies which our institutions of

learning do not fail to supply annually in sufficient number. His devotee, Calderon, never had done talking about him in the vacations. It is no place here to set down perfections which would require solid quartos to do them justice, but Calderon expatiated without ceasing upon his quickness of invention, his readiness of resource, his judgment, memory, the profundity and versatility of his learning. Hicks had even a wondrous mechanical turn. He had originated an anchor which was looked upon with favor by the vessel-men at Bell Dock, and which he thought of having patented.

Miss Calderon had not in fact been as much impressed by these accounts as might have seemed desirable. There is a natural perversity in the feminine mind at the school-girl period which does not always respect even the highest and holiest, and this perversity she exercised at the expense of Mr. Hicks. She had allowed herself to mock, among other things, at his superfluity of middle names, and more than once had inquired in her letters after "the Great Hicks" and "the Extraordinary Mr. Hicks." Calderon was naturally disgusted, as an admiring brother would be, at a levity like this. Still there was nothing to be done but await the opportunity of some meeting between the two, when its insensate folly would be glar-

ingly apparent. Such an opportunity had now arrived, and the Decay of Nations was in magnificent train to produce the desired conviction.

There were locusts rattling, in their sultry way, from the boughs of the great over-arching elm-trees without. Within the church, the warm atmosphere was heavy with the odor of flowers and sandal-wood, and full of a sort of mesmeric flicker of waving fans, which gave a drowsy influence. It was hard to fix one's attention. Lou Calderon's wandered to a hat almost exactly like her own, upon another young head in the vicinity, and the speculation could hardly fail to be suggested whether she too should not have done well to choose the ruffled bow instead of the buckle.

A further distraction was an elderly gentleman, who had made her acquaintance earlier in the day and now bent over occasionally from his seat in front, to address her confidential remarks.

One could hardly have taken him for anything but a business-man, as he was. His dress was neither good nor bad, his speech neither elegant nor coarse. His hair stood up in a rather spiky manner. An air of being ready to date an acceptance ahead, for a round lot, or throw off an extra five per cent. for cash, was not in abeyance even in his time of relaxation.

He spoke to the young girl with the freedom of superior age and of an assured standing.

"You don't remember me, of course, — I suppose not," he had said; "but I know *you*. You must excuse me, but I have been looking at you for some time. I ought to know John Calderon's daughter, I should think."

"My father?" said Miss Lou, elevating her eyebrows.

"Why, certainly; John Calderon. Our stores were alongside of each other for years. After he went out of trade I kind of lost sight of him. I have trotted you on my knee many a time. I could hardly do that now, with such a pretty girl, old fogy as I am."

"Oh!" said the young girl, thinking him eccentric, but pleased with the compliment.

Miss Annie Valentine, her companion, whose guest she was in the town for the few days of these festivities, sat by with an amused look.

"Yes, my name is Hoopley," continued the stranger; "you may possibly have heard of me. I have a boy here; that is why I am on hand. He does n't seem to come on the stage and show off, among the geniuses. Well, we can't all be geniuses. I 'll have to make a merchant of him. — Let 's see; you had a brother too. He ought to be pretty well along by this time."

"Oh yes; he is one of the graduates to-day."

"I want to know if John Calderon has a son old enough to be a graduate. Well, well, how time goes! I must look him up. He and my boy ought to be friends."

The orator descended, and walked up the aisle, adjusting his wrist-bands, with a calm consciousness of intellectual power and desert in the plaudits lavishly bestowed upon him. He had done grandly and he knew it. Nothing occurred to mar the desirable state of mind in which he was left till evening, for which the University Ball was set.

He went to this entertainment, but established himself in a favorable position only as a spectator — to find material, in the shifting, parti-colored crowd, for Thought. He did not dance. If any imputed as a fault the omission from his répertoire of so slight an accomplishment, they were not persons whose opinions were entitled to the least degree of respect.

The truth about his dancing was — if the digression be pardoned — that his ignorance of it was the result of youthful caprice. He had entertained an impression at a very early age that music and dancing were effeminate arts, by no means fitted to form part of the occupation of the Spartan-like being whom he figured the ideal boy to be.

"Yes, you want to make a girl of me," he had replied with withering sarcasm to all effort in this direction. "You will want me to sew next. I won't dance!" he persisted heroically. "I won't dance with a *girl*, any way."

Mr. Hoopley was also present at the University Ball. During the day he had conversed with the president of the University, and calculated the profits in a removal from the present site and sale of the buildings. He seemed to feel his own presence "among the young fry" as a sort of grim joke. Being here, however, he thought how it might be turned to account. His children were poor and would have their own canoes to paddle in the world. If they could conciliate friends in prosperous circumstances so much the better.

Mr. Hoopley had a large family, which for economy's sake he kept in a suburban town near the metropolis. He no doubt intended to act for their best good, but consulted it often in a way that seemed intolerable tyranny. In spite of his formidable business air also, he had had no great success in his affairs. He had been through at least one bankruptcy, and there had been rumors at the time — but when are there not rumors? Besides, is a man with the pressure of a family upon him to be amenable to all the petty scruples so easily observed by people whose affairs go swimmingly?

"It seems to me," said he, in confidential advice to his son at the University Ball, "that if I was a young fellow, I should make up to that girl of Calderon's. She will have fifty thousand dollars from her father's estate, and maybe more."

To Calderon, the brother, when he had renewed the old acquaintance he claimed with him, his manner was the perfection of brusque hospitality. He pressed him to visit them.

"Any friend of my son's," he exclaimed cordially. "This must be kept up — this must be cultivated. As long as we have a crust in the house, any friend of my boy's can have 'most all of it."

Calderon had been hurrying, when thus detained, to find the extraordinary Hicks for presentation to his sister, and now went on. He hoped that Hicks, though not a dancing man, would be good enough not to object to this. He desired his sister to have the honor and improving influence of Hicks's acquaintance.

Mr. Hicks, magnanimously, did not object to be presented.

Miss Calderon, in her part of this ceremony, made him a profound courtesy. She sank down with a willowy droop; she rose with a touch of *hauteur*. He made the observation, — unwonted for him, — during the moment in which

her bright eyes were lowered and their long dark lashes lay upon a complexion fresh and healthful, without decided color, that she was remarkably pretty. Her mouth, somewhat large, opened to laughter upon slight provocation, and displayed dazzling white teeth. She had placed near one corner of it a most vain and worldly dot of black court-plaster. Her round, young arms, a little angular as yet, were bare. Above a delicate line undulating about the shoulders, the diaphanous muslin which covered them took the warm ivory tinge of the flesh beneath.

"I think very highly of your brother," began Mr. Hicks, when he had given her his arm for a promenade.

"How patronizing!" was her internal comment. She set to work at once to devise uncomfortable responses for him. He touched upon the exercises of the day.

"If he thinks I am going to congratulate him upon his pompous old oration," she reflected, "he is very much mistaken." And so he was.

If he chose light topics, she accused him of making concessions to her inferior mental calibre; if graver, of pedantry. It was strange how poorly they got along. In despair, for the mere purpose of keeping up the talk, he turned to the Townsend prize essays, the award of which had been recently made. The style of

treatment adopted by Smith of Pomfret, in his discussion of "Suffrage as a Natural Right," seemed to him especially admirable.

"The suffrage is not altogether, as it were," said he, "a natural right. It is a gift of society granted upon certain definite conditions."

"I suppose you are very fond of dancing?" said Miss Calderon, with a languid air.

"Well, no, — ahem — no," replied Mr. Hicks, "I do not — exactly, — as it were — dance."

"Oh, *don't* you?" she exclaimed, with an extreme rising inflection. "I think it anybody's Christian duty to dance."

A ripping and rending sound was audible. Confused by a transition from Smith of Pomfret to the newer topic, so sudden that it made his head swim, he inadvertently trod upon a lady's train pulsing gracefully along in front of them, and tore it.

"I hope it is not irreparably injured," he remarked with concern to his companion.

"Oh, no, such matters are easily repaired. It is different from the decay of nations."

She slightly nibbled her exquisite under lip. It was not possible that she was laughing at him? That would have been a novelty, indeed, for Alexander Dwight Braisted Hicks. Still, he was thoroughly uncomfortable, and

would have been glad when the interview ended, except for the manner in which it ended.

Mr. Hoopley came up to them, putting forward his son with a hearty air.

"I want to see you making friends with this nice girl that I have discovered in my travels," said he loudly. "What sort of taste have you got? If I were a young fellow, I should have my name down in her day-book there, a page or so. You are a dancing-jack, are n't you? You understand this whirligig business, — don't you?"

"He must not be scolded," said she; "he has done his painful duty. We have one engagement, at least, and it seems to me it is the very next to this."

"Oh, you know him, do you? Well, he is n't a spokesman, like our friend Hicks here. He probably won't ever set any rivers on fire. You must take him as a kind of favor to his family, when there 's nobody else to be had."

Far from being a backward youth, as described by his father, the young Hoopley was in fact shrewd, quick, of a certain cynical humor, and likely in time to do full credit to the head of his house.

"Is n't he the most incorrigible old duffer that ever was?" he asked.

"No!" protested Miss Lou, pleased with the

broad flattery she had received, and still more with the manner of fatherly kindness, sadly unwonted to her, for she had lost both parents of her own long before. "I think him just as jolly and nice as he can be. That 's only his way."

"Well, it 's a very poor way."

It was highly irrational, of course, but Mr. Hicks began to find himself made uncomfortable by no more than a bare inspection of Miss Calderon's conduct after this. He observed her chat with the greatest zest with such inconsequential fellows as Smallgood, and the callowest of under-classmen, — persons who hardly knew Agamemnon from Aristides. She made pretense of dangerously assailing them with her fan. The cool unconcern with which she allowed them to encircle her waist, belted into its zone of dainty laces, was enough to cause forebodings of the speedy decay of any nation in which such things were possible.

He did not, however, refuse in consequence to pay a visit to her with her brother, on the following evening, at the house of Miss Valentine. In the calmer circle of domestic life he felt that his exceptional powers would be able to display themselves at last to their proper advantage; and he burned for the opportunity to establish himself in his natural prominence.

It is really painful to have to record that this second attempt was, if anything, even less successful than the first. The intellectual gifts of Mr. Alexander Dwight Braisted Hicks seemed to be in some inexplicable way under eclipse. Miss Calderon, quite early in the conversation, caught up a pretty Maltese kitten of the house that happened by, kept it on her lap, purred and cooed to it, and gave to it at least as much of her attention as to him.

Her brother, who saw the manner of the interview, looked stern reproach at her across the parlor for this, but she affected not to understand. She raised her eyebrows or wrinkled her forehead, as in limpid innocence, or quizzical inquiry. Other visitors arrived. Hicks lapsed into silence, wholly discouraged. Noting this, she presently turned to him and included him in some sweeping remark, as, —

"And Mr. Hicks, who seldom talks."

"You hardly appreciate how very much I improve my mind by listening," he returned, in irony as withering as he dared.

For the first time, upon this, she gave him a certain glance of favor. Perhaps she was, in her small way, of that Brunhilda type which is best pleased by an exhibition of rude mastery. Perhaps she was not to be won till bound hand and foot with the girdle of Siegfried.

"Must you go?" she asked him, tantalizingly, when he arose to take his leave.

"I fear I must."

And he bowed gravely over his hat, which he held in both hands.

His last glimpse of her showed her standing near the doorway, endeavoring in a laughing panic to avert the paw of the playful kitten, which had climbed upon her shoulder and was aiming at the tangles of her shining hair.

It would hardly be credited, but it is true, that so sage a philosopher, so profound an inquirer into the destinies of nations and the like, should go to his home, in a distant city, and institute complaints in the bosom of his family that he had not been taught to dance.

"But, my *son*," expostulated his mother, surprised and anxious, "I did everything *in this world* to have you learn, as you know, and you would not."

"I know, I know," he responded, still querulous, "but, all the same, you ought to have *made* me."

II.

Young Calderon was warmly urged further to make the visit to the Hoopleys at their place at Woodstone, as suggested, and he ac-

cepted. His visit was in time returned with interest by young Hoopley. Hoopley began at once to make a bold push to carry out the views laid down by his father with regard to the rich and pretty sister. It cannot be said that he makes over other admirers any very notable progress at first. Still, she is but eighteen, and her full property rights do not begin till she is twenty-one. He establishes a good understanding with her, so that there is no reason for discouragement, and he can keep his eyes open in other directions in the mean time.

Hoopley took a business career. In course of time he set up a bank at Woodstone, under the eye of his father, and in partnership with a capitalist, Brodhead, who was induced to put in the greater part of the funds, as against his knowledge of affairs and influence in the locality. Woodstone was a place to which, at this time, much attention was being directed. It was maintained by some that investment could nowhere so advantageously be made as in its fast-appreciating improvements. The Hoopleys were enthusiasts in the "boom," as it was called, and the elder Hoopley mortgaged his scanty possessions liberally to become the head and front of a corporation known as the Woodstone Land and Loan Company, engaged in forwarding the improvements.

Calderon, for his part, chose to go into the profession of medicine.

The place for the gifted Hicks was naturally the law. He made a year's preliminary studies at his home and then came to New York, bringing with him a vivid recollection of the fascinating Miss Calderon. She had scarcely been absent from his thoughts an instant in the mean time. If he had fallen in love with her, as seemed very probable, it would have been hard to tell why. It must have been the power of purely feminine good looks alone, since he had seen so little else, so little of qualities of mind or character to account — according to his own theories of what would have been justifiable in the matter — for the feeling. He longed for her possession, as he might for that of a charming vase or flower, or lovely jewel, to which it is no disparagement that it has not long been known, and is seen but for the first time. Once seen it is revered, allures, entrances on the instant. This had happened to Hicks, as it has to others, as wise, before him. Not that he could be expected to admit so much. On the contrary, he constructed for her an ideal nature in keeping with the fair externals that won him. In his view she was — she must be — noble, generous, of a good heart and keen interest in the higher things of life, only ob-

secured a little at present by waywardness and some defects of early education. As to her early education it had, no doubt, its defects, for it was under the lax government of a weak maiden aunt, who had succeeded to the direction of the Calderon household when it was bereft of both parents, and allowed her to do just as she pleased.

Calderon had now gone to Vienna, for its superior advantages in medicine. He had taken the specialty of an eye and ear practice, following thus a tendency of the time towards division of labor in his profession and trusting to make the most of his moderate abilities.

The absence of Calderon made the reopening of the acquaintance a little more difficult for Hicks; still he found means to reopen it. His heart gave a strong throb when he first saw her; she was prettier than ever. He had a keen remembrance of his early rebuffs, but felt himself more a man of the world now, more a master of himself. He had learned much in the mean time. She would be more impressed by him, and he would know better how to take her on her amiable side.

"It is said that if one makes an excellent impression the first time," he began, boldly, on his initial visit, "he will do well to stay away, so as not to spoil it. I have determined to see

if the reverse be not also the case. Our first meeting perhaps hardly came up to expectation on either side. I thought you a little rude, and you found me possibly a little stupid. Is it not so?"

"I cannot be expected to answer for your impression, but mine was not very different from the way you state it."

"You are frank."

"But you began it. Did you not say that I was rude?"

"I — ah — that is — an unfortunate expression, used but in jest. Allow me to withdraw it, and to say that I thought you at the time all that was — ah — amiable and —

"Perhaps you mean to imply that you do not think so now?" she cut in and kept him from perjuring himself further.

"Really," he cried, badgered into an outburst of his honest conviction, "I think you are absolutely ferocious."

Louisa Calderon threw back her head with a merry laugh. Hicks frowned with displeasure at first, but the next instant could not refrain from following her example. After this there was a much better understanding between them.

Hicks having surrendered unconditionally, there was no longer any need of her attitude

of perpetual menace towards him. Out of the strong, as it were, came forth sweetness; out of eater came forth meat. Still, as he had surrendered, he could hardly expect to escape all of the inconveniences attending the lot of a prisoner of war. He aspired to the dazzling pinnacle of her supreme favor, and he was not yet admitted even to her select coterie of intimates. He was not yet a dancing man; how *could* he become a dancing man at this late day? And she was bent upon dancing and reveling in her youth, like a bonny young Terpsichore of Madison Avenue. He hung about, growing more and more enamored, and also more and more disappointed, looking on moodily from the position of wall-flower, and seeking indications which he did not find. Finally he went away, saying nothing to her about his affection, having made up his mind that it would be quite useless.

Soon after, she sailed for Europe, to join her brother at Vienna, and make a long stay abroad. Hicks set up an office for the practice of the law in his native place, in a far from exemplary state of mind.

There were substantial reasons — he said to himself, as he fumed over his tasks in the new office — why he could hardly have pressed his suit, even with the most ample encouragement.

He had "a fortune in his education," as he had heard his family say was intended, but there were plenty of other brothers and sisters to be taken care of at his home, and that was practically all he had. This had in the college period given him very little concern. Successful in his studies there, puffed up with his small triumphs, used only to a text-book and blackboard view of existence, as it might be called, he had expected to step forth into the world and at once claim the place rightfully the due of the man of superior education and culture. He had at one time flattered his soul with the somewhat arrogant motto: "The man of ability needs no friends." But he had discovered, on his arrival in the great world, a very considerable amount of ability already in the field. He discovered that, pending the adaptation of the expensively-educated citizen to its practical requirements, it gets along very well with the citizen prepared for his place by hard knocks and his own quick wits. The man of study must have special resources within himself, he must extract from his state compensating pleasures of a special refinement, or else he is forever at a disadvantage with the man of action in the race for material success. This is well-nigh indisputable philosophy, but it is astonishing how cavalierly even good philos-

ophy may be treated by a young man who would like to marry at once. He regretted that he had not been put to service in the most bald and sterile kind of trade at fifteen, that he might now be a merchant in receipt of ample income, and master of his own destiny. He came one day, in a rage, upon his manuscript Causes of Decay in Nations, in the dark closet to which he had committed it, and tossed it into the fire. He had hoped at one time that it might be demanded on the lecture platform, and that he should deliver it to entranced audiences throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Another reminiscence of those callow days, which he came upon at the same time, was the improved anchor invented by him. This was the one the vessel-men at Bell Dock had thought well of, as above. He lingered over it meditatively; it looked surprisingly good to him. He could not see what was the matter with this idea even now. The invention claimed for itself increased holding power, exemption from fouling the cable, facility in tripping, and also in transportation and storage. These advantages were to be obtained by pivoting the flukes upon the shank, so as to turn freely, instead of making one and fast with it in the usual way — "all substantially as described."

The youthful lawyer took it out, and began, in the ample leisure he enjoyed, to tinker at it again. He called to mind the great fortunes often made by such things, but sighed: —

"Ah, I am not the Aladdin sort of fellow to have any such luck happen to me."

Nevertheless he made ready to get it patented. It was worth risking the cost of the patent fees upon, at any rate, he thought. But in the midst of this he obtained employment as junior counsel in a bank case, which developed into an unexpected importance, and the anchor was unceremoniously put away. He acquitted himself so well, too, in the bank case, as to secure further business, and soon quite a small run of prosperity.

The Calderon brother and sister returned in due course from abroad. The latter brought with her a supply of ravishing Paris toilettes, though these were by no means needed to enhance her natural fascinations and draw a circle of admirers again about her. The brother brought his diplomas as a full-fledged doctor, and proceeded to set up an office in an eligible location, for the practice of the eye and ear specialty.

Hicks had managed to be present to welcome them back, and thereafter began to avail himself of every possible pretext to make visits to

the metropolis and them. Oh, joy! oh, rapture! she was not yet engaged, and he could not learn that anybody enjoyed any greater favor than himself. Hoopley was very persistent, but Hoopley somehow seemed utterly out of the question. In these visits, if he chanced not to find her, he talked with almost equal delight to her aunt, usually esteemed a very uninteresting person. His state of feeling surrounded with a halo of regard everything in the remotest way connected with her.

One day, while he was with her, a package of photographs of herself was sent home from the maker's. She graciously allowed him to retain one. Emboldened by this, he found himself the next moment rashly proposing to her. He had had almost nothing else in his heart and on his lips ever since her return, but he had not meant to come to it in this sudden way. He threw out the suggestion of the inconceivable happiness it would be to him if, with the picture, he might be allowed to hope to have also at some time the dear original.

"There is nothing very novel about your method," said she. "You might have found something a little original. They all say that when they get a chance." She spoke as one being an authority, and he, meekly, did not gainsay her. "It is enough to take one's breath

away to be snapped at in such sudden fashion. No, of course you cannot," she concluded.

He returned, and renewed his importunity on this subject, more than once, so that it got to be a kind of quaint controversy between them.

"I tell you *no*," the girl would say. "I like you well enough, but not well enough to marry you. I am not in love with you."

"Oh, why?"

"You have gray eyes, for one thing, and you have often heard me say that I never could bear gray eyes."

"They are not gray,—not exactly,—and, besides, what a trifling reason that is, if you have none better," the harassed lover complained.

"It is *not* trifling. But that does not make any difference; I don't wish to hear anything more about it."

Hicks thought of making her brother the confidant of this affair, but the new-fledged doctor was full of his own trouble, and he did not do so. The doctor had seen more of life in the mean time, and considerably abated the exaggerated reverence in which he had once held his friend, the prodigy of college days, and was besides engaged, with small success, in building up a practice.

As an entire ton of lead is squandered in battle to the end of the destruction of every

human life, so each patient of the doctor was secured only at the expense of an infinitude of time and pains. A small fortune in time and money preceded his acquisition, and even then he was not sure, for the doctor, naively betraying his youth and inexperience, was apt to lose him again by very excess of solicitude. Calderon, in fact, with the very best disposition, had not the art of "getting along" in the world. He was simple, and rather vacillating of judgment, over-confiding, to his own detriment, and of a hotness of temper, when stirred up, which increased rather than diminished his liability to be imposed upon. In the untoward condition of his practice he began to take counsel as to what he had best do; and, oddly enough, it was young Hoopley, as it happened, to whose advice he chiefly committed himself. Young Hoopley finally came forward with a sudden, fortunate inspiration.

"I will tell you," said he, clasping his hands together behind his head, as he sat, in an easy chair, in the doctor's comfortable apartment, and biting one of the doctor's excellent cigars tight in his teeth and talking around it, "I hate to make a man feel uncomfortable when there is no way of helping the case, but when there is, it is my way to speak out, fair, square, and above-board, every time."

Dr. Calderon listened with interest.

"Frankly," said the adviser, "your rôle is business and not a profession. Your talents all point that way. I have long seen it. Your perseverance, thoroughness, theoretical notions of minutiæ and economy are all thrown away here, in a profession which is, besides, greatly overcrowded."

"No? Why I don't know, half the time, which is the right window to go to to get my checks cashed," returned Calderon, flattered to have so admirable a list of qualities ascribed to his credit.

"Oh, all that is easily learned. Details are nothing when one has, like you, the natural talent, the business head. I should not wonder, now, if you made the biggest kind of strike in some such line as ours. If I were you I would just clear out this beggarly rabble of patients, strike my shingle, and make a totally new deal."

This was too radical advice to be taken at once, but Calderon let it sink deep into his consciousness. Nor was this a mere random conversation. It proved that the partner Brodhead, young Hoopley's associate in the Woodstone bank, was at this very time anxious to dispose of his interest and get out.

"He wants to recuperate his health, to travel,

and that sort of thing," Hoopley explained. "He is an eccentric person, is Brodhead; lets no sacrifice of his own interest stand in his way, once he has made up his mind to do a thing. Now here you have a half interest in a solidly-established, paying concern, of the highest standing, — everything A1 about it, — increasing custom, gilt-edged paper, shares of the Crooked Air Line, and the Woodstone Land and Loan Company, — everything; and all to be had at even less than Brodhead's original investment. It 's a chance such as won't occur again in years."

The elder Hoopley came also to join in the persuasive argument. It seemed to him, too, a chance that rarely offered. How appropriate that an old friendship between the two boys should be thus cemented by a prosperous business connection. What a perfect and restful confidence they could have in each other, — so different from the usual distrust.

"My boy Tom, there," said he, "would trust you with untold millions. I am sure of it."

"You are right, I would," added the magnanimous Tom.

Young Calderon weakly yielded, abandoned his profession of medicine, and, as much to his own surprise as anybody else's, shortly became a banker. One half of his purchase-money,

paid to Brodhead, was the same evening turned over by the latter to Hoopley, a transaction which almost looked like a commission for the sale of the interest. Brodhead retired to his travel and the recuperation of his health with but a shred of his original capital, but he manifested a good deal of contentment even with that. He had, in fact, cherished the hallucination that the bank was about to break, and thought himself well out of it on any terms. Nothing of course could be more baseless than this, for had not both the Hoopleys shown Calderon that it was on the very flood-tide of prosperity, and the opportunity to buy into it one of those rare strokes of good fortune with difficulty to be secured?

Woodstone appeared to continue to improve, as an opening for investments, from this time onward. The bank was able to use, in these directions, unlimited funds, and by degrees all the money of Calderon was transferred hither. It was but natural next that, her brother being now a banker, Miss Calderon's money also should be deposited in the bank.

The new arrangement brought about a close intimacy between the families. Miss Calderon, in her turn, visited the Hoopleys, found that their place at Woodstone had a somewhat run-down-at-the-heel and needy air. There were

numerous little children, — some rather unkempt, — and it was but a ramshackle conveyance that drove her to and from the station. But the fatherly air of Hoopley towards her was even more marked than before, and in consideration of this she took a genial view of everything. She reflected that kind hearts are better than fine appearances, and was disposed to be pleased with all.

It even began to be talked at this time that they should remove to Woodstone. Her brother was anxious to do so. He had acquired a glib method of thumbing over bank bills, and was now the paying-teller of his own bank. His sister did not desire to stand in the way of what was for his best good and pleasure, and so the handsome New York residence was sold and they took another in Woodstone, depositing the balance saved in expenses in the same place as the other funds.

Long before this, however, Hicks had dropped off from his long rôle of patient devotion, finally abandoning the field, as he said to himself. A man can put up with a good deal in this way, but there comes a time when the conviction is forced upon him that the heart for whose sympathy and affection he so longs is hopelessly cold towards him; and this time had come for

Hicks. He lapsed into a sullen moodiness. From this he was aroused by a stinging feeling of resentment, which finally accomplished what all other motives combined had not been able to. He threw himself into the gayest of company; he became a dancing man, and an excellent one at that. This new departure was not long in being followed, as the way is, by reports of especial devotion on his part, now to this fair one, now to that. Some of these were carried, by roundabout agencies, even as far as Miss Calderon. On hearing them, she characterized such light and fickle conduct, in her own mind, as it deserved.

Some reports of her also came to his ears, especially after her removal to Woodstone, where there was a family of Braisteds, his near relatives, naturally acquainted with all her movements. He did not listen too willingly to these reports, and they were but casual. Finally came a rumor, first denied, then re-asserted, of her engagement to Hoopley. This seemed to him a very natural consummation, — Hoopley being her brother's partner, — and, with a bitterly afflicted heart, he now looked upon the affair as wholly at an end.

Five years had elapsed since the first presentation of Alexander Dwight Braisted Hicks to Louisa Calderon. If he were still a prig, it was

not for want of hard knocks and acquaintance with many phases of life. His elusive dream of happiness and its disappointment had passed into a quasi-forgetfulness; his period of spasmodic gayety had lapsed as well, and he had settled back into something like his normal, though changed self.

The improved anchor had had but small share, in all this time, of an attention too much engrossed by other things. It had been patented, nevertheless. This year, in a more liberal vacation than usual which he allowed himself, he proposed to indulge himself in the luxury of having one of the anchors cast, on a large scale. In the mean time he had had made a number of pretty miniature models of it, to distribute among manufacturers and others with the view of drawing their attention to it and endeavoring to put it to some practical use. True, the leading manufacturers had rejected it already. Still there might be others to receive it more favorably, and this chance he thought well to try for. On the very day that the models came home, he was summoned, by telegram, to go and draw some very confidential papers for his relatives, the Braisteds, at Woodstone. He would much rather not have gone to a place capable of exciting in him memories of so painful a nature, and where, by ac-

cident even, a painful meeting might await him. But on the whole it was not in the least likely that he should meet her; the business was of but a few hours only, and it was of pressing importance.

He thrust his miniature models hastily into his pocket, in order to examine them at leisure on the way, and took the train.

III.

He found awaiting him, in an office on the pleasant main street of Woodstone, one of the younger Braisteds, junior partner with his father in a firm which, according to the inscription on the shades in the plate-glass windows, dealt in real estate and commercial paper. The senior partner had not yet come down, and the two gossiped in a friendly way pending his arrival. Hicks touched lightly, among other things, upon his patent, and, in response to the request of Braisted, who manifested an interest, passed over one of the small models for inspection.

At this very moment, as the fatality of destiny would have it, two ladies in a pony phaeton drove up to the door, and here again were Louisa Calderon and Annie Valentine. A tiger in ornate livery was climbing down from his

perch behind to deliver a message, when Braisted, apparently knowing himself called for, ran out in person to the ladies at the curb-stone.

"So good of you to come out," said Miss Calderon, bending forward while holding the reins loosely in her lap. "We want you for to-morrow evening, if we can get you. It is a little German for Annie, — quite impromptu. I am seeing everybody myself. She insists that she is suddenly called home, when I was depending upon her to make me such a nice long visit. Tell her how bad she is."

Braisted looked at Miss Valentine, who smiled gently from below her lace-edged parasol, in deprecation of her badness. He was still dangling the little shining metal anchor, which he had held in his hand at the time of the interruption.

"What is that?" asked Miss Calderon, her attention drawn to it.

"The model for a patent anchor. Will you look at it? By the way, it is the invention of your friend Mr. Hicks, who was just showing it to me," and he transferred it delicately from the hold of his forefinger and thumb to hers.

"Oh, is Mr. Hicks here?" she exclaimed, startled, and involuntarily turning to gaze at the window, where she detected him, staring

out at her with a moody and contemplative air.

"Possibly Mr. Hicks will honor us also?" she added, re-assuming all her dignity of manner.

"It will give me great pleasure to go and ask him," said Braisted, and he ran in to do so, leaving the model with her.

He returned the next moment, bringing with him Hicks, who, having been discovered, could hardly refuse to make his appearance. The sudden apparition of his lost love had caused him most poignant emotions, but he was now in a measure in control of them.

"How do you do? Is n't it a lovely day?" she began, as if they had parted but yesterday and on the most commonplace of terms. "I have asked Mr. Braisted to help me persuade you to come to a little German we are going to give Annie to-morrow evening. You are not fond of dancing, I know, but my brother is not either now, he is getting to be such an inveterate man of affairs; and we will try to find some way of amusing you."

"I regret that I shall not be able to."

"We were admiring your patent," continued Miss Calderon, apparently paying little attention to this. "An anchor must be a very good thing to invent; it is the emblem of hope."

Hicks looked, in surprised reproach, to see if there were a meaning in this, but the next moment, as if struck by another thought, she said, holding the model before her eyes for admiration, "They would make such lovely favors for my German."

"Perhaps they could not be put to better use," said Hicks. "I have a pocketful, spoiled in the casting, by the omission of the patent stamp and date, and they are quite at your service."

"But you cannot spare them?"

"Oh, yes, perfectly, — if you will take them."

He found it impossible to cherish resentment in her winsome presence, though a secret feeling at the same moment told him that he should experience dire consequences of bitterness and repining from the contact, brief as it was. He drew forth the models and placed them in her lap.

"They will be such a novelty!" she exclaimed, showing a childish delight over them. "They must have little pink and blue ribbons run through the rings and fastened to rosettes. You shall have all the credit; you will see what a great success they will be."

"I thank you very much. I am here but for a few hours only, and I was not intending to stay."

"But you might if you wished to, — and on my brother's account, if not mine."

She spoke in a half-pouting way, but he was not to be persuaded, and she abandoned him, with an air of reluctance, and drove away.

"It hardly looks right," said Braisted, as they turned back again into the office, of the blue shades and plate-glass windows. "She 's a nice girl, and all that, but it would be a little more decent for them to try and get along without Germans just now."

"Just now? What special sort of time is it just now that people who can afford it should not give entertainments if they wish?"

"You have not heard, then? But how should you, for you do not live here, and it is matter only of furtive rumor and not public knowledge as yet. But we have facilities for getting inside information, being in somewhat the same line, and I don't mind letting out to you in confidence, since you are interested in them, a point or two about Calderon's bank."

"What is the matter with it?" queried Hicks, in sharp surprise.

"Oh, it is going all to pieces. Hoopley and Calderon are hopelessly loaded down with all sorts of trash, — any quantity of Land and Loan Company's shares, old Hoopley's private paper, and so on. They 've been in a bad way ever

since Brodhead went out. He got out only by the skin of his teeth, I understand. I should not be astonished to hear of their going to smash now almost any day. I doubt if creditors will be pleased then to recall these festive doings, that 's all."

"And is there no mistake about this?"

"It is as sure as fate."

"It is not possible that Miss Calderon knows of the situation as yet. They must have kept it from her."

"Now I think of it, that may be. That simpleton of a brother of hers may have been afraid to tell her. He has probably lost her money with his own. I would hardly care to be in his shoes, the idiot! He won't be able to support himself, when thrown upon his own resources, much less her."

"But she is engaged to Hoopley," said Hicks, nervously, "and he has no doubt saved something, and will at any rate be a better protector."

"They said she *was* engaged to Hoopley at one time, but for quite a while past I 've doubted it, if it ever was so. That 's one of the bad signs, you see. Hoopley has been in a better position than anybody else to know just what she had, and what he could make out of her by marrying her. He 's seemed to play fast and

loose with her, and just now there is n't much evidence of any engagement at all. I 've always half liked the fellow, — he 's good company, — but I believe he 's capable of throwing a girl over in a minute, as soon as he made up his mind that it was n't to his advantage to marry her."

This hint of impending trouble found in Hicks a sympathetic auditor. It could be said of him, as of the early Scotch monarch, even had the case been one in which he possessed no such personal interest as the present, —

> "A tender heart had brave Fitz-James,
> Fast poured his eye at pity's claims."

"I infer, then, that you will not go to their German?" said he, by way of rousing himself from a half-absent mood of pondering commiseration and tender yearning into which he had been plunged by the intelligence.

"Oh, yes, I shall," returned Braisted, cheerfully. "I want to be in at the death, and I suppose *I* can stand it if they can."

At the earliest feasible moment Hicks hurried to Calderon, at his bank, won his confidence by working with all the ingratiating art at his command upon his feelings, and drew the whole miserable story from him. The bankrupt made at first a faint attempt at facetiousness.

"We have been expecting you before," said

he. "It was well you did not put off your visit longer, or you might not have seen our magnificent institution at its best. We think of putting up the shutters."

"Is it so bad as that, my poor friend?" said Hicks, with no inclination at all to smile.

"It is worse than that," cried Calderon, breaking down; "it is worse than anything you can possibly imagine. "Oh, Hicks, why have I been so robbed and ruined? I have not a dollar left in the world."

Hicks threw a strong arm for a moment about his shoulders, calling him "old fellow," and some other of the few brief expressions that men may use to each other in kindness.

"Poor Lou! poor Lou!" groaned the brother. "It is all well enough for me, — I deserve it, — but what shall I say to her? What shall I do with her?"

"Hers, too? Her means of livelihood all gone with the rest?"

"Every dollar of it; every cent of it."

"And what has become of it, Calderon? Tell me truly. I want to help you, if I can."

"How do I know? Ask Hoopley, rather. Everything was in his hands from the beginning. I almost suspect him of being a swindling, d—d scoundrel, Hicks. How can I help it? Oh, why have I been so ensnared and

plundered, when I have tried so hard to use the gifts that I had and make an honorable position for myself and the rest of us in the world?"

"One thing more let me ask. Does your sister — does Miss Calderon — know of it?"

"Not yet. I have not had the heart to tell her; and shall not now, till this entertainment is over and her friend has gone. Such is the extent of my notable capacity for affairs. She shall have one more day of uninterrupted happiness in her life. That at least I can accomplish."

The first important case of Hicks, as we have seen, had turned upon the fraudulent wrecking of a bank, and the knowledge thus acquired now again proved highly useful.

"Let us begin at once," he proposed to Calderon, "an examination of the books, while Hoopley's suspicion is not yet excited, and we shall not be interfered with."

"If I could but trust you, if I could but trust you!" moaned the unhappy victim of misplaced confidence, ready to manifest distrust of the most innocent now, when hesitation could no longer do any good. Oh, forgive me, forgive me!" he went on. "I cannot feel that I have any longer a friend in the world."

He produced the books, and scanned the face

of the friend, newly come to his rescue, with a sort of helpless docility.

The worst surmises of Hicks were but confirmed by this inquiry. The pair of confiding young people had been shamefully plundered, and that under guise of the most sacred feelings, under pretense of romantic and generous friendship, hospitality, and fatherly care. The examination continued nearly all night and extended into the next day. Hicks was still occupied over the ledgers when Hoopley came in. Hoopley's countenance changed when he saw what was being done. He turned pale, and asked, —

"To what may we attribute this kind interest in our affairs?"

"Let me refer you to Mr. Calderon," rejoined Hicks, frigidly.

Philosopher and attorney as he was, he could have choked the perjured rascal with a good grace.

The sword of Damocles was thus hanging above the house, and the last retaining filaments of the hair breaking away, as it were, when the dainty diversion of Miss Calderon's German took place. The dance, as is its wont, was a multitude of charming plays, such as might have been indulged in by the shepherds

and shepherdesses of a Watteau's Arcadia. The dancers raised a May-pole, decorated with long colored streamers, the ends of which they took at random, and the two who found themselves with streamers of the same color were partners. They thrust their hands at random over the top of a high screen, and those whose hands met were partners. Candidates for favor were brought up behind a maid seated in a chair, and looked over her shoulder into a mirror in which she saw them. She rejected as many as might suit her caprice, till she found the right one, and whirled away with him in the sinuous dance.

They called and chose one another, in the various figures, by the names of flowers, — rose, pink, azalea, and heliotrope. They decorated one another with stars, crosses, rosettes, and butterflies. They presented nosegays and bonbonniéres. They pulled gilt mottoes, which parted with a little explosion, giving out caps and garments of tissue paper. These they put on, and danced thus in motley. There were flight and chase, captivity and setting free; there were marching columns, labyrinths, and enchainments. Ever and again they broke into the gay rotations of the waltz, the soft, enchanting measures of which unceasingly pervaded the whole, — as if it were declared that

all combination, all definitely settled plans were vain, and the only good was in a mad, joyous whirl. There was a zest of the unpremeditated and unforeseen, so that those who especially desired to be partners, when they found themselves so, could be pleased with fancies of a sudden providential interposition in their favor.

Miss Valentine was a very pleasing person, and her new friends of the place expressed a sincere feeling of regret that she must go. She was dressed in pink, of a soft and winning shade, recalling the amiable manners she possessed. About the hostess, Miss Calderon, on the other hand, was a certain dazzle, in keeping with the manner of her youthful beauty. She wore a white silken gown, of a creamy tone, which shot out gleams through an over-drapery of lace, like the gleam of ripples on water in a mist.

A number of elderly persons, in the shape of parents, chaperons, and the like, were also present at the entertainment, with the rest. They looked on at the dancing a part of the time, and again dispersed to amusements of their own. Some found entertainment in whist, and gave it no little interest. Audible laughter and controversy from their tables, at times, drew the attention of some fair young couple,

who would stop, in passing by, to look over the shoulders of the elders and exchange glances of quizzical wonderment that persons of such an age could still find zest and enjoyment in life.

The senior Hoopley, with others, held, in a certain defiant way, a place among these wall-flowers. Calderon had not countermanded his invitation, already issued, because he felt that he could not do so without exciting his sister's mistrust and leading to inquiries. Hoopley, on the other hand, presented himself here by way of an assertion to all the world, — to be taken into account afterwards, — that he was not a man who could be expected to keep the run of all the bankruptcies, or who knew much more about them than anybody else. He was conversing with an old Mr. Bolton, a wealthy retired ship-builder, who had come with his daughter, and they talked in the positive way that old men, long fixed and confident in their opinions, adopt. They had got upon the subject of political reform.

"The suffrage is to blame, in the first place," said he, strenuously. "It needs purification; there lies the point. If I had my way, I would make any tampering with it the worst offense on the statute-book. I would hang the scurvy rascal who did it as high as Haman."

"Sound!" cried Mr. Bolton, with even greater

heat. "And next, sir, we ought to look after the thieving villains in private life; those carrying out the betrayals of trust, bogus failures, and all the financial crimes of our day. Society is rotten with them, rotten to the core. They have got to be rooted out."

This could surely not have been intended as of a personal bearing, yet the elder Hoopley, for some unexplained reason, winced under it.

It need hardly be said that young Hoopley was not present, being very much occupied just then with putting some few affairs of his in order, preparatory to a hasty departure. He purposed to remain away till certain developments should blow over.

A very blonde young girl approached Bolton with a little anchor and other trinkets in her hand, and, smilingly getting his attention from the discussion, said: —

"I have brought you my favors to keep for me, papa. Here is one, a pretty anchor, that is quite in your line. Is n't it lovely? I thought it would amuse you. Sleepy little papas ought to be amused when they are kept up so late."

She brushed her father's cheek with a little kiss, and he dropped the favors carelessly into his lap, paying the anchor, for the moment, no more attention than the rest, dismissed her

with some playful admonition, and went on with his talk with his neighbor.

Hicks, coming late to the party, leaned for some time against an outer door-jamb and looked in from the hall upon the scene of gayety, brightness, and color in the drawing-rooms. He could regard this revelry upon the very brink of ruin with but a gloomy eye. The merry, rhythmic dance swept by him, as he gazed, in many a delectable change. Ever his eye sought its central figure as she moved with looks of unwonted foreboding mingled with tenderness and compassion. Aspirations to save her, were there any way possible, struggled ineffectually through his brain.

All at once, as he thus meditated, he saw her driven towards him as one of a charming team of girls, three in number, trammeled up in the harness of a white, silken ribbon, and urged forward by a youth with a riding-whip in his hand. It was the whip and reins figure of the German. A girl was forming a similar team of youths, over against the first. As she came by, she threw her rein playfully over Hicks, and included him in the trio. He would have protested, but she would grant him no respite. Each was the partner of him or her to whom he found himself opposite, and he was opposite Louisa Calderon.

For a moment he saw a slight involuntary trace of annoyance upon her countenance. How stupid of him, she was thinking, to allow himself to be involved in the dance when he was not a master of it, and to thus show an unnecessary awkwardness! Why *would* he do it, when he appeared to good enough advantage, as she admitted, in other ways? She suppressed it notwithstanding, and gracefully held out her arms, to be taken into his when they met, purposing, after a semblance of a turn or two, to make him go for a glass of water and return her to her seat.

But what was her surprise when his step melted into hers, easily and in the most perfect accord. They glided away together, without a jar, in harmony with the delicious music. She felt herself firmly supported, lightly and knowingly guided. Never had she danced with more ecstatic zest; she could have wished that the enchanting measure might last forever. He whirled her back at length, slowly circling, to her place.

"I suppose you think you have accomplished something very wonderful?" she said to him as soon as she could get her breath, panting with pleasure.

"Not in the least wonderful," he answered, smiling.

"Where and how did you learn?" she could not forbear asking next, more seriously. "You were always so opposed to it, and made such a time about it."

"The fascinations of our girls at home were, after all, too much for me. Oh, they are fascinators there, indeed," he answered, with a certain roguishness. She appeared slightly crestfallen, and he bowed himself away.

Hicks felt his spirits involuntarily elated by this incident. It was a species of small triumph over her in her own domain, though, to be sure, thought of triumph at such a time was unworthy. So good a dancer as he did not lack further invitations. Miss Calderon began to watch for the first time with a certain envy his affable acceptance of them, and his graceful and dignified bearing, from which she could not now withhold her entire approval.

Towards midnight there was a pause while supper was partaken of. The young women spread napkins over their laps and bestowed themselves comfortably in camp-chairs or on the stairway. Their partners brought them, from a central table, oysters, salads, and ices. A merry chatter, broken by laughter, filled the rooms. A handsome man of thirty told the company of his mastiff, which had come gravely stalking home with a ham in its mouth, stolen from nobody knew where or whom.

"A dog like that is worth having," commented a listener. "He might be taught to keep the house in provisions."

"This teaches us never to resist temptation," said another frolicsome maid, who had a way of tagging on a moral to everything.

"For my part, it is the only thing I can't resist," said the narrator, gazing at Miss Calderon, who passed at the moment.

Miss Calderon and Hicks found themselves together in the music-room, deserted now by the musicians. There was but one other couple present.

"Play something, Miss Maud," the masculine member of it was urging.

"I can't; I only play a little for my own *amazement*," replied his companion, and they retired, leaving our friends alone.

The impending disaster and his altered relations towards her — though known as yet only to himself — gave Hicks a courage to declare himself, which he had never before possessed in the same degree. Once more, without in the slightest acquainting her with his peculiar knowledge of her affairs, he brought about an explanation with Miss Calderon, and prayed her to be his wife.

"I have never half dared to talk to you about it before," he said, "I was so troubled

about my affairs. They are in better shape now, though by no means brilliant. It was always, to me, a good deal like looking in at the window of a candy shop, without the ability to buy. That is the way the children are tantalized."

She smiled at the complimentary notion of her being as attractive as that.

"It seems to me that I ought somehow to have been more forcible and pushing. I ought to have carried you by storm. They say women like that."

"Well, if that is n't the most extraordinary — well, I can tell you, sir, that they don't, and you would n't!" she protested, energetically.

Then she half closed her eyes, meditating with interest, perhaps, upon what his process of carrying her by storm might have been.

At this point a loud voice interrupted, and old Mr. Bolton came into the room in a searching way, dangling, by its rosette, the little anchor his daughter had left in his lap with her other favors, and said, —

"I am looking for the young man who had the head on his shoulders to get up this idea. Ah, here you are," to Hicks. "Now, then, let us talk it over."

"One moment," returned Hicks, petulantly, wishing this meddlesome intruder at the bottom

of the Red Sea. Then, to his sweetheart, in a low, caressing tone, "Do not answer now. Only think of what I have said. Think of it if — if any misfortune should soon — should ever — befall you." Upon which he gave his attention to the new demand upon it.

"It seems to me that you have a very good thing here, young man, — a very good thing, indeed."

"Quite likely," responded Hicks, dryly.

"It may be so good a thing that it would pay the right parties to take it up and go into it, if you wanted to make the right arrangements. It is something in my line, you see. I 'm a kind of sea-faring man, as you might say. I 've built a great many vessels in my time, and sailed in 'em, too. I know the value of a thing of this kind the minute I set eyes on it."

It may well be supposed that the apathy of the inventor vanished at short notice upon this preamble. An appointment was made for the the next day. An interview was held at Bolton's house, after which Bolton was to take a week for careful consideration of the patent and submit a proposition.

During the week in question Hicks was laboriously occupied with the affairs of the bankrupt Calderon, and hardly appeared to give his patent a thought. At the end of it he saw

Bolton again, and hurried from Bolton's presence straight to that of Louisa Calderon. His demeanor was elated and joyous.

"I have come to announce to you a great piece of good luck," he said. "My anchor has met with a wonderful success. Mr. Bolton is tired of being a retired capitalist, sighs to embark again in some active enterprise, and finds it adapted to his purpose. He buys an interest in it, and is willing to put up the money to go into the manufacture of it on a large scale. There is no telling what we shall make from the very start. When you consider the number of ships there are, and that it will be indispensable to every one of them, any moderate estimate seems paltry."

All this was very pleasant for him, no doubt, but Miss Calderon could hardly be expected to indulge exaggerated enthusiasm over the success of others, with her own affairs in such deplorable condition. Was it kind, was it delicate in him to flaunt it thus before her at a time like this? The first shock of the bankruptcy, with its shattering of ideals and its revelations of falsehood and ruin, was over, and she was looking into the future with a certain calmness, but still overcome with a deep despondency even more wearing than the earlier tears of despair. She endeavored to muster, nevertheless, such

expressions of felicitation as politeness demanded.

"Now," said he, cutting abruptly into the midst of these half-hearted words, "I am not accustomed to brag; you must know why I have laid these matters before you? I have come for my answer. What is it to be?"

He had begun with a zealous boldness, but somehow, with the last sentence, lapsed into his former diffidence of tone and manner.

Pretty Miss Calderon was startled. She had made up her mind that after all that had happened in the interval, there was an end of the subject as a matter of course. He would not recur to it and he would not come back. But he had come back. Well then, it was only in pursuance of some fancied sense of duty or magnanimity. But now, again, she recollected that he had spoken at the time in a mysterious way of some misfortune, something that might befall her. Could it have been that he knew of what was to happen, and his offer had contemplated exactly her present situation?

She would accept no such sacrifice, — for sacrifice it would be. Were there not plenty of other girls — with fortunes, too, whereas she had nothing — who would be only too glad to marry him? Having pursued all these reflections, she replied to his inquiry and expectant

manner, twisting her hands the while with an involuntary nervousness, in her lap, —

"I have concluded not to accept."

"You have not so concluded; I will not hear of it," protested the lover, cheerily affecting to contradict her, but in reality in growing affright.

"Yes, I *have*," she insisted.

"Oh, don't say so, my darling. You break my heart!" he appealed, now in a far different tone.

"Yes, you think," she began, half inaudibly, but with a vestige of her old manner of willfulness and defiance, "that just because I have lost my money" —

"No, I do not think anything of the kind. You are as capable of refusing me as ever. I know you would like to for that very reason. But it shall not be put upon that ground. You are as rich as anybody. If you give Germans, and introduce people's patents, and make their fortunes, I suppose you are entitled to a part of the proceeds. Anybody else would take the whole."

"But your fascinating girls at home, — whose influence was so irresistible?" she objected, retreating to a last feeble position.

"Nonsense! there is not one of them worth mentioning in the same century with you."

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